Whole of Community Engagement Initiative

Final Report

prepared for

Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme (HEPPPP)
Indigenous Grants Round 2013

Covering the period 1 July 2014 to 31 August 2017
The WCE logo was created at the beginning of the initiative to represent unity and a shared vision. The design was created by Darwin based Indigenous artist Jessica Sariago, who has Djaru heritage from the WA Kimberley region.

The narrative, on which the design is based, is available on the WCE initiative website. The logo was co-developed by Dr. Lisa Watts, Ms. Donna Stephens and Ms. Aurelie Girard in consultation with other WCE staff.

Go to: https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/about/

Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.

DISCLAIMER

This document reports on the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative and is the Final Progress Report. This document should be read in conjunction with the Final WCE Evaluation Report. A separate evaluation report has also been written by each of the 6 participating WCE communities. All of these Evaluation Reports are included as Appendices to this Report and are also available at https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/resources/. The information presented in the Evaluation Reports was written by the stated authors and does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the WCE initiative as a whole or of the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University.

SUGGESTED CITATION

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Acknowledgements

The WCE initiative was funded by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme (HEPPP). The Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University is extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to undertake this initiative. The WCE team wishes to acknowledge the generosity, support, friendship and guidance provided by remote Indigenous community education leaders, Elders, teachers, researchers, facilitators, mentors, students and youth who played a pivotal role in WCE strategy and delivery. We also wish to sincerely thank all Indigenous Corporations and other organisations and individuals who have in some way been a part of the WCE initiative. It would be impossible to name each person with whom we have worked closely over the past three years.

Particular thanks goes to the WCE initiative Steering Group who provided guidance and advice throughout the project, and whose participation often included extensive travel and contribution of time. (Steering Group members are designated with an * in the listings below and on the next page). Thanks also to Dr. Gretchen Ennis who led the Social Network Analysis (SNA) process and provided much support for using it along the way. Thanks also to Jessica Sariago, who did the graphic design of the WCE initiative logo.

The WCE team are especially grateful to our key partners:

- **Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership, CDU:** *Professor Steven Larkin (former Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership),* *Wendy Ludwig, Cheryl Godwell, Kim Robertson, Shane Motlap, Melissa Royle, Aoife Muldowney, Ann Macabuhay, Erica Luchich, Simone Heinrich and all other OPVC-IL staff*
- **Other areas of CDU:** *Professor Martin Carroll, Alison Reedy, Wendy Kennedy, Lorraine Sushames, Inoka Perera and many more…*
- **Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE):** *Peter Stephenson, Patrick Anderson, Jurg Bronnmann and John Guenther*
- **Northern Territory Department of Education:** *Sally Hodgson, *John Harris*
- **North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management:** Angela Shima, *Melissa George, Erica McCreedy, Matalena Tofa*

We also would like to acknowledge our community-level and other partners, particularly:

- **Yalu’ Marnghithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation (Galiwin’ku)**
- **Yambirrpa Schools Council (Yirrkala)**
- **Nyinkka Nyunyu Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre (Tennant Creek)**
- **Yuendumu School (Yuendumu)**
- **Yuendumu Mediation Centre (Yuendumu)**
- **PAW Media and Communications (Yuendumu)**
- **Aboriginal Research Practitioners Network (ARPNet - Territory wide)**
- **Steve Sutton and the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods**
## WCE Team members (throughout the initiative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allison Stewart</strong></td>
<td>Strategic Priority Projects Manager</td>
<td>2015 – 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Priority Project &amp; Program Manager</td>
<td>Feb - Sept 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. <strong>Anne Lowell</strong></td>
<td>Research and Evaluation Manager Research and Evaluation Advisor</td>
<td>2014 – 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2015 - mid 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aurelie Girard</td>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
<td>2014 - 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben Christie</td>
<td>Project Support Officer</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Bronwyn Rossingh</td>
<td><strong>Yirrkala Community Engagement Leader</strong></td>
<td>2014 - 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat Street</td>
<td>Evaluation Coordinator</td>
<td>2015 - 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedric Egan</td>
<td><strong>Yuendumu Education Team Leader</strong></td>
<td>2015 - 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Scholz</td>
<td>Tennant Creek Mentor and Engagement Officer</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dean Yibarbuk</em></td>
<td>Gunbalanya and Maningrida Mentor and Engagement Officer</td>
<td>2015 - 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Djuvalpi Marika*</td>
<td><strong>Yirrkala Community Co-researcher</strong></td>
<td>2015 - 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna Stephens</td>
<td>Community Teacher’s Liaison Leader</td>
<td>2015 – early 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Dr. Elaine Lawurrpa</td>
<td><strong>Galiwin’ku Community Research Leader</strong></td>
<td>2014 – early 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maypilama</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Eliani Boton</td>
<td>Galiwin’ku Mentor and Engagement Officer</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Elizabeth Katakarinja</td>
<td><strong>Yuendumu Community Co-researcher and Facilitator in Education Engagement</strong></td>
<td>2015 - 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Shalley</td>
<td>Senior Statistician</td>
<td>Mid 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gabrielle Egan</td>
<td><strong>Yuendumu Education Team Leader</strong></td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Geoffrey Shannon</td>
<td>Tennant Creek Community Researcher</td>
<td>2015 - 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A/Prof. James Smith</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>2014 – Jan 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamie Hagan</td>
<td>Gunbalanya and Maningrida Mentor and Enrichment Officer</td>
<td>2014 - 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Jimmy Langdon</td>
<td><strong>Yuendumu Mentor in Community Education Engagement</strong></td>
<td>2015-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kade Green</td>
<td>Tennant Creek Mentor</td>
<td>2015 - 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keresi Motonicococa</td>
<td>Administration and Finance Officer</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Lisa Watts</td>
<td><strong>Yuendumu Community Engagement Leader</strong></td>
<td>2014 - 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maree Melican</td>
<td>Community Teachers’ Liaison Leader</td>
<td>2015 (part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matalena Tofa</td>
<td>Galiwin’ku and Yirrkala Mentor and Enrichment Officer</td>
<td>2014 - late 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Janssen</td>
<td>Temporary Project Coordinator</td>
<td>2016 - 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millie Olcay</td>
<td>Gunbalanya and Maningrida Community Engagement Leader</td>
<td>2014 - 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The project submission/design team included: Prof. Steven Larkin, Prof. Martin Carroll, Alison Reedy, Dr. Bronwyn Rossingh and Lorraine Sushames

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABA</td>
<td>Aboriginal Benefits Account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACIKE</td>
<td>Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges &amp; Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACSF</td>
<td>Australian Core Skills Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATSIHEAC</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Advisory Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIITE</td>
<td>Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU</td>
<td>Charles Darwin University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DET</td>
<td>Australian Government Department of Education and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPMC</td>
<td>Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEPPP</td>
<td>Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISSP</td>
<td>Indigenous Student Success Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITMS</td>
<td>Information Technology Management Services (CDU Department)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LLN</td>
<td>(English) Language, literacy and numeracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAILSMA</td>
<td>North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>National Priority Pool funding (Dept. of Education and Training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTCET</td>
<td>Northern Territory Certificate of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT DoE</td>
<td>Northern Territory Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPVC-IL</td>
<td>Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAR</td>
<td>Participatory action research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCHW</td>
<td>Research Centre for Health and Wellbeing (CDU Department)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIEL</td>
<td>Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (CDU Department)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTO</td>
<td>Registered Training Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA</td>
<td>Service Level Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCE</td>
<td>Whole of Community Engagement (initiative)</td>
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</table>
### Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aspiration</strong></td>
<td>‘A hope or ambition of achieving something.’ – The Oxford Dictionary.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Both-ways philosophy</strong></td>
<td>‘Both ways learning’ refers to an approach in which learning together occurs through the sharing of Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges (Bat &amp; Shore, 2013; Boyukarrpi et al. 1994; Christie, 1987; Harris, 1980; Marika, 1999).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus-based WCE staff</strong></td>
<td>WCE initiative team members based in Darwin or Alice Springs; campus based staff regularly travelled to partner remote Indigenous communities to work with community-based WCE team members. The original campus-based team were employed between July 2014 and January 2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community-based WCE staff</strong></td>
<td>WCE initiative team members based in partner remote Indigenous communities. These team members were local Indigenous leaders with significant experience in education, health, community development, research, and other fields. Community-based staff were employed between January 2015 and early 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complexity</strong></td>
<td>In the context of complex adaptive systems, this refers to the notion that there are a large number of elements (for example, individuals, groups, organisations) that interact in many diverse and unpredictable ways. Complexity and systems thinking theories can be used to guide innovation for social development in situations in which solutions are not straightforward (Cleveland, 1994; Williams &amp; Van’t Hoft, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical pedagogy</strong></td>
<td>A philosophy of education that is concerned with transforming power relations that are oppressive and lead to the oppression of people through awakening of the critical consciousness (Aliakbari and Faraji, 2011). This approach is most commonly associated with Brazilian educator and activist Paulo Friere and is underpinned by principles of critical theory of the Frankfurt school (Freire, 1970; Guess, 1981).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Developmental Evaluation (DE) is an evaluation approach that can assist social innovators develop change initiatives in complex or uncertain environments. It facilitates real-time, or close to real-time, feedback to program staff thus facilitating a continuous development loop. According to Patton (1994; 2011), developmental evaluation is particularly suited to innovation, radical program re-design, replication and complex issues. Innovations can take the form of new projects, programs, products, organisational changes, policy reforms, and system interventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>‘The process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university.’ - The Oxford Dictionary. The WCE initiative recognised intercultural forms of education within this definition, that is, diverse educational practices that were relevant to people living in remote Indigenous communities and were inclusive of traditional Indigenous ways of knowing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Further education</strong></td>
<td>Education beyond schooling that includes higher education and post-school education that does not include acquisition of a degree, such as Vocational Education and Training (VET) and adult learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Higher education</strong></td>
<td>Formal post-secondary school education in which degrees are obtained; often delivered at universities, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes, academics and colleges.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indigenous</strong></td>
<td>For the purposes of this report ‘Indigenous’ refers to Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and/or Australian first nations people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indigenous knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Indigenous knowledge as a concept has been the subject of much debate. Indigenous knowledge in the WCE initiative referred to the knowledges acquired by individuals through the lived experience of being Indigenous, but not by being Indigenous alone. That is, Indigenous standpoints are also informed by other aspects of individual and collective identities (Nakata, 2007). Such knowledge can include understanding about, for example, traditional Indigenous kinship and lore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interculturality</strong></td>
<td>Interculturality refers to the intersection of multiple and partly discrete cultures, to individuals’ interaction across these intersections, and to the resultant evolution of culture (Dervin, 2016; Holliday, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>‘Facts, information, and skills acquired through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject.’ – The Oxford Dictionary.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Participatory action research (PAR)** | A research approach that involves a cyclical process of critical reflection, knowledge construction and action. Generally PAR is underpinned by the following common principles:  
1. A collective commitment to investigate a ‘thematic concern’ (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988).  
2. A desire to engage in self- and collective reflection to gain clarity about the issue under investigation.  
3. A joint decision to engage in individual and/or collective action that leads to a useful solution that benefits the people involved.  
4. Power sharing throughout the research process so that participants have control over the research process, including over how the research is used (McIntyre, 2008; McTaggart, 1997; Tandon, 1988). |
| **Vocational Education and Training (VET)** | Education and training for the acquisition of qualifications in job-related and technical skills, in industries such as trade, office work, retail, hospitality and technology. |
| **Warlpiri**          | This term refers to Indigenous people and languages of the Tanami region of the Northern Territory. |
| **Yolŋu**            | This term refers to Indigenous people and languages of the East Arnhem region of the Northern Territory. |
1.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative was conceived in response to recommendations contained in the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (Behrendt, 2012). It was led by the Office of Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership (OPVC-IL) at Charles Darwin University (CDU) in collaboration with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), the Northern Territory Department of Education (DoE) and the Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Education (ACIKE).

The WCE was initially established as a large two-year multi-site Participatory Action Research (PAR) project, which was subsequently extended to two and half years. The grant was awarded in December 2013 and the WCE Steering Group first met in February 2014. The initiative gained impetus with the appointment of the Program Manager from 1 July 2014 and activities continued in each of the six partner communities until December 2016. A funding variation enabled continuation of the Strategic Priority Project (SPP) component of the program until 11 August 2017. (Refer to Appendix 1: WCE Timeline).

The WCE funding application stated that the “aims of the WCE initiative was to inspire six remote and very remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory (NT) to include higher education as a normal expectation and milestone along the life journey. The objectives of the WCE initiative included:

- Exploring current community perspectives of higher education, and linking these with existing strategies for achieving quality of life aspirations;
- Co-creating ongoing opportunities for community, research, academic and public policy leaders to engage in mutually beneficial and critical relationships; and
- Identifying means for making education relevant and culturally and physically accessible

The intent was to establish strong and sustainable educational pathways from early childhood to lifelong post-secondary education.”

Refer to Appendix 2: the WCE Final Evaluation Report for further discussion about the scope of these initial Aims and Objectives.

In pursuit of the above aims and in order to share key learning the WCE initiative was awarded a 2016 Australian Rural Education Award by the Society for the Provision of Rural Education in Australia. The award was given for “an existing project that demonstrated a proven link between a rural, regional and/or remote school or learning context and the local community, and benefiting a defined group”. The WCE was also nominated for a 2016 CDU Vice Chancellor’s Award for Exceptional Performance by General Staff; a 2016 Australian Evaluation Society Award; and a 2016 Financial Review Higher Education Award (in the equity and community engagement categories). Key learnings have been shared with different audiences at local, territory, national and international levels. (Refer to Section 10.0 for details).

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1 Gunbalanya, Mainingrida, Yirrkala, Tennant Creek, Yuendumu, Galiwin’ku
2 Note comments about “normal expectation” in the Appendix 2: WCE Final Evaluation Report
The intent of this Final Report

This Final Report provides a narrative account of activities and outcomes against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) associated with the implementation of the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative led through the Office of Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University (CDU). The WCE has been funded through the Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program of the Australian Government Department of Education. The report provides a summary account of the planning and implementation of activities in each of the six remote and very remote communities of focus together with overall commentary. This Report builds on information contained in the previous five WCE Progress Reports previously submitted to the Australian Government during: July 2014, November 2014, June 2015, November 2015 and June 2016.

This document generally reports against two separate streams of implementation. Work progressed by CDU staff to meet the WCE Aim and Objectives; and work progressed by the North Australian Institute of Indigenous Land and Sea Management (NAILSMA) relating to building educational aspiration and pathways specifically associated with Indigenous land and sea management. Reporting against a smaller project led by the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL) associated with the development of an Indigenous fire curriculum specific to Northern Australian contexts is also included. This report is not an evaluation report, and is best read in tandem with Appendix 2: Final Evaluation Report of the Whole of Community Engagement initiative, alongside the six Community Evaluation Reports (Appendices: 3 to 8).

Understanding the reporting context

As described in the last progress report, some KPIs are difficult for CDU to objectively report against. In the remote Indigenous communities in which CDU and our partners work, traditional evaluation surveys using Likert scales have not been very useful to assess satisfaction, or the impact, of our work. KPIs aimed at defining community disposition towards tertiary education have been equally problematic. There are multiple reasons for this, some of which include low levels of English language, literacy and numeracy; previous negative experiences among participants when engaged in research and/or evaluation work; and resistance towards Western evaluation methodologies. Therefore, reporting against percentage participation satisfaction may provide an inaccurate picture of what is actually being achieved. This does not mean that there is a low level of participant satisfaction, in fact, quite the contrary. However, it has meant that different approaches have been used to report against the work CDU and its partners have undertaken. This responds to community needs and priorities.

CDU has opted to provide a narrative style report based on feedback received from key stakeholders throughout the WCE initiative. Extensive qualitative evidence has also been incorporated into the Final Evaluation Report and Community Evaluation Reports. In general, CDU has found qualitative evaluation processes more useful for initiatives of this nature because they more closely reflect Indigenous methodologies and/or Indigenous standpoints. For example, storytelling, ‘yarning’, direct observation, interviews, Indigenous leader statements, staff reflections, and the expression of processes using cultural metaphors. These methodologies have all been consistently used throughout the WCE initiative, and its evaluation, to gauge the efficacy and effectiveness of the initiative.

Note: WCE Progress Reports and balance sheets previously were submitted to the Australian Government during: July 2014, November 2014, June 2015, November 2015 and June 2016.

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<th>Activities and milestones: as per conditions of grant</th>
<th>KPIs: as per conditions of grant</th>
<th>Status</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Milestones to be achieved by Oct 2014</strong></td>
<td><strong>KPIs to be achieved by Oct 2014</strong></td>
<td>WCE progress Report approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Steering Group established.</td>
<td>• 2 staff recruited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit Program Manager</td>
<td>• Program Operational Plan signed by Steering Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit Administration Officer</td>
<td>• 6 communities identified and prioritised</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Program Operational Plan.</td>
<td>• Signed partnership agreement between CDU and NAILSMA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Identify target communities, schools and partners.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Partnership agreed between CDU and NAILSMA outlining NAILSMA’s specific and costed contributions to the program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Milestones to be achieved by Dec 2014</strong></td>
<td><strong>KPIs to be achieved by December 2014</strong></td>
<td>WCE progress Report approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit Community Engagement Leaders</td>
<td>• 7-9 staff recruited</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Recruit Community Teachers’ Liaison Leader</td>
<td>• Mentors in place at each community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit Mentoring and Enrichment Officers</td>
<td>• Number of community activities; and number of participants; % satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish relationships with identified remote communities (until target of 6 achieved). Once established, each relationship includes: assessing community educational effectiveness status and utilising as baseline data; working collectively to understand needs and develop tailored planning methodologies.</td>
<td>• Number of Elders &amp; Leaders activities; number of participants; % satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit and train mentors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement community planning methodologies and commence utilisation of findings to inform specific support requirements</td>
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<td>• Maintain and strengthen community relationships, partnerships and network</td>
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<td>• Conduct and evaluate community events and activities.</td>
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<td>• Conduct and evaluate events and activities for Elders and Leaders.</td>
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<td>• Monitoring and evaluation of 1st phase progress.</td>
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<td>Activities and milestones: as per conditions of grant</td>
<td>KPIs: as per conditions of grant</td>
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<td><strong>Milestones to be achieved by June ‘15</strong></td>
<td><strong>KPIs to be achieved by June 2015</strong></td>
<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conduct and evaluate mentorship activities.</td>
<td>- Six Community Partnership agreements signed, with associated Community Baseline Data reports</td>
<td>WCE progress Report approved</td>
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<td>- Conduct and evaluate community events and activities.</td>
<td>- Community disposition towards tertiary education improved in each partner community (precise KPI tbd) in partnership with Elders</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conduct and evaluate events and activities for Elders and Leaders.</td>
<td>- Number of mentorship activities; number of participants; % satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Monitoring and evaluation of 2nd phase progress.</td>
<td>- Number of community activities; number of participants; % satisfaction</td>
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<td>- Number of Elders and Leaders activities; number of participants; % satisfaction</td>
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<td><strong>Milestones to be achieved by November 2015</strong></td>
<td><strong>KPIs to be achieved by November 2015</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conduct and evaluate mentorship activities.</td>
<td>- Six Community Partnership agreements signed, with associated Community Baseline Data reports</td>
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<td>- Conduct and evaluate community events and activities.</td>
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<td>- Conduct and evaluate events and activities for Elders and Leaders.</td>
<td>- Number of mentorship activities; number of participants; % satisfaction</td>
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<td>- Establish long term partnership activities that will enable sustainability of program areas that can be maintained after program completion</td>
<td>- Number of community activities; number of participants; % satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Monitoring and evaluation of 3rd phase progress.</td>
<td>- Number of Elders &amp; Leaders activities; number of participants; % satisfaction</td>
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### Activities and milestones: as per conditions of grant

- **Milestones to be achieved by June 2016**
  - Conduct and evaluate mentorship activities.
  - Conduct and evaluate community events and activities.
  - Conduct and evaluate events and activities for Elders and Leaders.
  - Establish long term partnership activities that will enable sustainability of program areas that can be maintained after program completion
  - Plan and implement strategic priority projects aligned with community priorities (as per letter dated 17 August 2015)
  - Monitoring and evaluation of 4th phase progress

- **KPIs to be achieved by June 2016**
  - Community disposition towards tertiary education improved in each partner community (precise KPI tbd in partnership with Elders).
  - Number of mentorship activities; number of participants; % satisfaction.
  - Number of community activities; number of participants; % satisfaction.
  - Number of Elders & Leaders activities; number of participants; % satisfaction.
  - Number of long term or recurring partnership activities.
  - Number of strategic priority projects underway that respond to community priorities

- **Status**
  - WCE progress Report approved

### Milestones to be achieved by September 2017

1. Final Steering Group meeting and stakeholder forum
2. Planning and delivery of strategic Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) activities for remote Indigenous learners
3. Final monitoring and evaluation
4. Final report for the project

### KPIs to be achieved by September 2017

5. Program funds fully acquitted.
6. Community disposition towards tertiary education improved in each partner community.
7. Report published and circulated to the sector.

### Status

- 1. Met
- 2. Met
- 3. Submitted August 2017
- 4. Submitted August 2017
- 5. Audit Report to be submitted 30 October 2017
- 6. Met
- 7. Pending Departmental signoff
3.0 Final outcomes as at 31 August 2017

NOTE: Please state progress to date against milestones and each KPI and whether it was met and give reasons for any significant delays.

3.1 Steering Group establishment and engagement

WCE Steering Group

A WCE Steering Group was established in February 2014. This group included senior representatives from Charles Darwin University (CDU), Northern Territory Government Department of Education (DoE), the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) and the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. Steering Group Terms of Reference (TOR) were endorsed by the WCE Steering Group in March 2014. The TOR was later amended to include nominated Indigenous (community-based) representatives from each of the six communities from 2015 onwards with unanimous support of the former Steering Group members.

A total of 14 WCE Steering Group meetings were held across the course of the initiative. These were held on:

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<tr>
<td>6 February 2014</td>
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<td>27 October 2014</td>
<td>25 October 2016</td>
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<td>16 February 2015</td>
<td>6 June 2017</td>
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3.2 Recruitment of key personnel

Full-time Staff Recruitment

The WCE Manager

Associate Professor James Smith was appointed to the WCE Program Manager role on 1 July 2014 and continued in the role until 31 January 2017 under a secondment with the NT Government. Allison Stewart managed the initiative from 1 February to 30 September 2017.

Project Co-ordinator

Recruitment to the Project Co-ordinator role was initiated in July 2014 but this was delayed due to an internal applicant being offered the position and then deciding not to take up the offer. Ms Aurelie Girard was appointed to the WCE Project Co-ordinator role from the December 2014 through to 31 August 2017. Ms Melissa Janssen fulfilled this role from September 2016 to January 2017 (back-filling for a period of maternity leave).

WCE Community Engagement Leaders

Dr Lisa Watts (Central Australia), Dr Bronwyn Rossingh (East Arnhem) and Ms Millie Olcay (West Arnhem) served as WCE Community Engagement Leaders (CELS) from September 2014 through to December 2016.
Mentor and Enrichment/Engagement Officers

Ms Peta Fraser (Central Australia), Dr Matalena Tofa (East Arnhem) and Mr Jamie Hagan (West Arnhem) commenced as Mentor and Enrichment Officers (MEOs) between September and November 2014. Ms Fraser ceased working with WCE in April 2016, and was replaced by Mr David Scholz who commenced immediately from May 2016 and continued until November 2016.

Dr Tofa ceased her employment in January 2016 and was replaced by Dr Eliani Boton from April 2016 until December 2016. Mr Hagan ceased work with WCE in December 2015 and Mr Yibarbuk transitioned from a casual community-based role into a full-time MEO role from January 2016 until December 2016.

Additional Indigenous community-based mentors were employed in some communities (see casual staff reporting below).

Community Teacher Liaison Leader

Ms Donna Robbins was appointed as the WCE Community Teacher Liaison Leader from October 2014 to January 2016 under a secondment with the NT Government. Dr Terry Moore was subsequently appointed to this role from May to December 2016.

Administration and Finance Officer

Ms Keresi Motonicocoka was appointed as the Administration and Finance Officer part-time between October 2015 and March 2016 and full-time from March to December 2016.

WCE Evaluation Team

Dr Anne Lowell was appointed as the WCE Research and Evaluation Manager on a part-time (0.5FTE) basis from 1 February 2015 to 30 December 2015. This was reduced to 0.2FTE from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2016 to coincide with the appointment of the Evaluation Co-ordinator.

Ms Cat Street was appointed as the Evaluation Co-ordinator from August 2015 to August 2017. This position was initially 0.6FTE until November 2015; then 0.8FTE until October 2016; then full-time from November 2016.

Strategic Priority Projects Manager

Ms Allison Stewart was appointed as the Strategic Priority Projects Manager from November 2015 to 29 September 2017. Her role was expanded to include responsibility for WCE program management during 2017.

Casual Staff Recruitment

A key element of the WCE initiative was the engagement of remote Indigenous community-based staff. Roles varied according to knowledge, skill, experience, areas of interest and background, but generally included Indigenous leadership, governance, mentoring, research and cultural brokerage within community and educational contexts. A number of these staff had university degrees. The appointment of remote Indigenous community-based staff involved a negotiated process with key Elders, leaders and stakeholders to identify ideal candidates in each of the participating communities.

In many instances identified candidates were the leading cultural authorities on education related matters within their communities. Many of these staff also had substantial experience serving in Board roles at the community and/or regional level, including executive positions on local School Councils.
The community-level recruitment process commenced in late 2014 with the first appointment made in January 2015 followed by other Indigenous, community-based staff who were employed incrementally throughout the implementation of the WCE initiative. This included:

- Dr Elaine Lawurrpa Maypilama (Jan. 2015)
- Mr Dean Ylibarbuk (Maningrida / Gunbalanya) – later employed as a Mentor and Engagement Officer on a f/t basis from a very remote base
- Ms Seraine Namundja (Gunbalanya)
- Ms Serina Namarnyilk (Gunbalanya)
- Ms Yalmay Yunupingu (Yirrkala)
- Mr Djuwalpi Marika (Yirrkala)
- Mr Simon Fisher (Yuendumu)
- Ms Elizabeth Katakarinja (Yuendumu)
- Ms Jimmy Langdon (Yuendumu)
- Mr Cedric Egan (Yuendumu)
- Ms Gabrielle Egan (Yuendumu)
- Ms Geoffrey Shannon (Tennant Creek)
- Ms Valda Shannon (Tennant Creek)
- Mr Kaade Green (Tennant Creek)
Many of the above staff were employed in “Research Active” positions to support the WCE initiative.

The following Indigenous community-based staff have, been awarded Honorary University Fellow appointments at CDU as a result of their engagement through WCE initiative:

- Mr Dean Yibarbuk (Maningrida, Gunbalanya)
- Ms Rosemary Gundjarranbuy (Galiwin’ku)
- Mr Simon Fisher (Yuendumu)
- Mr Djuwalpi Marika (Yirrkala)
- Ms Yalmay Yunupingu (Yirrkala)

These honorary appointments promote ongoing collaboration beyond the timeframe of the WCE initiative and are based on their extensive research experience, knowledge and expertise within their culture, community and NT generally.

Subcontract with Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation

In Galiwin’ku staff were employed through sub-contracting arrangements with a local Aboriginal community-controlled Corporation known as Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw. This included the local employment of:

- Ms Rosemary Gundjarranbuy (Galiwin’ku)
- Ms Evonne Mitjarrandi (Galiwin’ku)
- Ms Dorothy Bepuka (Galiwin’ku)
- Ms Beulah Mewura Munyarryun (Galiwin’ku)
- Ms Delvine Munyarryun (Galiwin’ku)

All campus-based and community-based staff were included in week-long WCE face-to-face team workshops/meetings held in Darwin, Tennant Creek and Maningrida throughout 2015 and 2016.

The team also gathered together to attend the National Forum on Indigenous Pathways and Transitions into Higher Education, held at CDU in November 2015; and the national Indigenous Leaders Conference in November 2016, where a range of papers were presented.

Further details about WCE team members can be found at: https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/people/
3.3 Establishing the scope of WCE operations

Community Prioritisation, Partnership and Participation

The WCE Steering Group led the short-listing process associated with the identifying priority communities. This included a number of selection criteria such as community readiness, community infrastructure, student enrolments, VET and Year 12 completions, and broadband bandwidth. The six preferred communities agreed by the WCE Steering Group included:

- Yirrkala
- Galiwinku
- Maningrida
- Gunbalanya
- Tennant Creek
- Yuendumu

Initial community consultations, led by WCE staff, took place within each of the preferred communities through discussions with local Indigenous leaders, key school stakeholders and service providers. There was a very high level of community interest expressed, with all communities agreeing to participate in the WCE initiative. Support was assessed in multiple ways. For example, letters of support, verbal approval and the establishment of local Reference Groups. Ongoing planning was supported by regularly (i.e. monthly) community visits.

Operational Planning Processes

Operational planning and implementation, particularly at the community level, was Indigenous-led and Indigenous informed. All community teams, with the exception of West Arnhem, developed a Community Action Plan together with communities to guide local level priorities, timeframes and approach. Plan development was informed by a set of Community Level Action Planning and Evaluation Guidelines (Appendix 9), although the extent to which these were used differed across each community context. Planning was also informed by: the original grant application (Aims, Objectives, approach etc); the Conditions of Grant and a document entitled Scoping the Whole-of-Community Engagement research project (Sept. 2014); the development of the human research ethics proposal; and the WCE Steering Group (who met throughout the initiative); and ongoing community/stakeholder consultation.

The WCE Steering Group, the majority of whom were Indigenous, were provided with detailed activity reporting at each face to face meeting to monitor and assess the planning and implementation progress. These meetings provided an opportunity for key partners to ask questions and provide feedback. Later in the WCE initiative, Indigenous community representatives were given a detailed verbal briefing about each agenda item prior to the formal Steering Group meetings. The intent was to clarify any confusing English or specialist terms/concepts and to provide an opportunity for reflection and discussion in advance. Indigenous community representatives were also given the opportunity to talk about key learnings and activities in their respective communities during each Steering Group meeting.

WCE subscribed to the Quality Improvement Program Planning System (QIPPS) to support a co-ordinated approach to program planning among CDU staff and between communities. This is a web-based program planning tool and was used in the early stages of program planning only (i.e. 2014-2015). This included training for all commencing WCE staff in 2014, with the expectation that community-based teams would document baseline data and information relevant to each community context in other ways. Early
feedback indicated that a more flexible approach to planning was required that was capable of responding to the unique needs and priorities of each community in a more iterative way. Based on feedback from staff, QIPPS was deemed to be too prescriptive and cumbersome for the WCE initiative. A decision was made to cease using QIPPS as the preferred planning tool in the latter half of 2015. A collaborative planning approach between CDU staff and key community stakeholders was preferred. This provided an opportunity to draw on Indigenous standpoints and metaphors during planning and implementation phases. It also facilitated a planning process that was explicitly based on two-way learning.

A range of documents were developed to guide planning (including engagement approaches), implementation and evaluation processes throughout the WCE initiative. These were often perceived as iterative documents to be refined as the WCE initiative progressed. For example, a Communication and Engagement Workshop was held on 29 September 2014 to inform early planning processes. This informed the subsequent development of a Communication and Engagement Strategy, including underpinning communication principles (Appendix 10). This Strategy document was endorsed by the WCE Steering Group in February 2015. It was used as a key reference document throughout the implementation of the WCE initiative.

Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines (Appendix 9) were developed in consultation with key stakeholders throughout the latter half of 2015 (upon the cessation of using QIPPS). This included input from Indigenous community-based staff. These Guidelines were implemented from 25 February 2016. As noted above, Actions Plans guided delivery at the majority of community sites. An overarching Research and Evaluation Framework (Appendix 11) was also developed in collaboration with all WCE staff and implemented from 24 May 2016 onwards. These documents were formally endorsed by the WCE Steering Group in June 2016. The extent to which these documents were used, differed across each community context.

In addition, key deliverables associated with community-based priorities and actions were built into multiple Service Level Agreements with partner organisations. These formed part of the broader program planning and reporting documentation. (Refer to Sections 4 and 12)
4.0 Formal partnerships developed through WCE

Strategic partnerships developed through the WCE initiative have strengthened relationships between a number of organisations; and with remote and very remote Indigenous communities across the NT. This has supported the delivery of a range of activities throughout the course of the WCE initiative (as described further below). This has ultimately provided a solid platform for future collaborative work and further partnership development in relation to education and training, research, evaluation, employment and other strategic projects beyond the timeframe of the WCE initiative.

1. **Formal Partnership with NAILSMA**

A ‘Contract for Goods and Services – External Suppliers’ was established between CDU and NAILSMA on 30 July 2014 to lead activities that “promote higher education pathways in land and sea management”. The contract ensured that NAILSMA would undertake activities in line with the aims and objectives of the WCE and that it would “use existing networks and community engagement expertise to ensure that project activities align with community aspirations”. It was proposed that “on-country and on-site activities will support community understanding of the social, cultural, economic and environmental priorities that Higher Education can address and contribute to.”

1. A variation to this contract was executed on 16 September 2014. This variation was approved in order to enable:

2. Continuing the piloting (phase 2) of a Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management in Yirrkala and Maningrida in partnership with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. (This involved community Elders delivering accredited units using traditional knowledges to VETiS and/or Learning on Country students in their local schools/communities).

3. Support remote Indigenous learners from low socio-economic backgrounds to share their experiences about participation in NAILSMA activities; and to build their aspiration to pursue further education through the engagement with other Indigenous students at a regional, national and international level.

4. As per contractual requirements, NAILSMA completed project management plans (PMPs) in consultation with key community stakeholders for each of the selected six remote or very remote communities in the NT. These PMPs were presented and endorsed by the WCE Steering Group in July 2015. Each PMP included, at a minimum: a) Clearly defined objectives, strategies, tasks/activities and expected outcomes that align with HEPPP-WCE program objectives b) a clear description of the likely resources required c) clearly articulated timelines d) Community level Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that align with the overarching HEPPP-WCE KPIs e) a communication strategy, and f) a risk assessment. Implementation occurred throughout the remainder of 2015 and 2016. (Further implementation activity is described in section 6.0).

A further variation with NAILSMA was negotiated on 30 August 2016 to extend the trial delivery of a Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management in Yirrkala and Maningrida until November 2016.

2. **Partnership with the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL)**

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) was executed with RIEL on 16 December 2014 to lead the development and piloting of an Indigenous fire curriculum specific to a Northern Australia context. Further implementation activity is described in Section 7.2.

3. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DoE**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) specifically relating to the WCE initiative was executed with the NT DoE on 6 July 2015.

4. **MOU with BIITE**

A MoU specifically relating to the WCE initiative was executed with BIITE on 10 July 2015.

5. **SLA with the Research Centre for Health and Wellbeing (RCHW) at CDU**

An internal SLA was negotiated with the Research Centre for Health and Wellbeing to provide Social Network Analysis (SNA) training to WCE staff. This was executed on 14 November 2014. This work was supported by Dr Gretchen Ennis and involved collecting and presenting three waves of social network analysis data as part of the evaluation process underpinning the WCE initiative.

6. **SLA with Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation**

A partnership with Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation in Galiwin’ku was established through the execution of two separate SLAs on 29 June 2015 (with a variation executed on 13 November 2015) and 20 May 2016. This partnership involved the delivery of a local mentoring program, research support, the development of a cultural induction package, and workshops about pathways into higher education.

7. **SLA with Yambirrpa Schools Council**

A partnership with Yambirrpa Schools Council in Yirrkala was established through the execution of an agreement on 5 May 2016. The partnership involved the delivery of workforce development for Indigenous teachers, research about Yirrkala and homelands education history, mentorship and pathway development activities, Yolŋu Matha language resources, and community-based celebrations that promote pathways into higher education. In addition, the Yambirrpa Schools Council partnered with the WCE initiative to deliver a Joint Remote School Council Gathering in May 2016 (further details in Section 5.3).

8. **SLA with RIEL and a MOU with the Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network**

A partnership with Aboriginal Research Practitioners Network (ARPNet) was established through the execution of a SLA with RIEL (auspicing on behalf of ARPNet) and a MOU with ARPNet Directors on 15 October 2015 and 20 October respectively. This was specifically to undertake PAR activities in the West Arnhem region (both Maningrida and Gunbalanya). This resulted in the preparation of two reports to develop community action plans owned by each of the local communities for implementation beyond the timeframe of WCE initiative.

9. **SLA with Central Desert Regional Council**

A partnership was developed with the Central Desert Regional Council on 17 May 2016. This was to support the Yuendumu Mediation and Justice program to reduce bullying and increase attendance at the Yuendumu School.
10. SLA with PAW Media and Communications
A partnership was developed with PAW Media Communications in Yuendumu on 29 May 2015. This partnership involved the establishment of an Indigenous leadership group to develop a Warlpiri Research Centre with a focus on Indigenous research capacity building to document educational histories across the region.

11. Licence Agreement with Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre
A licence agreement was established with Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre in Tennant Creek on 17th December 2015. This was to provide a culturally safe space from which Indigenous staff and youth could engage and interact to meet the objectives of the WCE initiative. This included a space to facilitate a youth-elder event about Indigenous education pathways.

12. MOU with Research “Us”
A MOU was developed between Research “Us” and OPVC-IL on 2nd August 2016 as a result of the WCE initiative. This was to build educational research capacity in remote communities.
5.0 Community level activities, outputs and outcomes led by WCE

5.1 Galiwinku

The WCE team conducted numerous initial consultations with Indigenous leaders, individuals, groups and organisations at Galiwinku during 27-31 October 2014. This included the engagement of Dr Elaine Lawurrpa Maypilama as Yolŋu Interpreter and co-researcher during the initial consultation process, which included a gathering of a local ‘backbone’ committee. Dr Maypilama was subsequently employed as a Community Research Leader to assist with WCE planning and implementation. Early consultations involved engagement with the Shepherdson College School Council who expressed a strong interest at looking at ways to strengthen higher education pathways including the need for education and training to be more explicitly linked to employment and further education options. Endorsement for WCE implementation was also sought from the East Arnhem Regional Council – Galiwinku Community Advisory Board who have since supported the initiative. Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw - a local Aboriginal owned and managed organization, also provided written evidence of its support.

Collaboration with Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw (Yalu’) Aboriginal Corporation.

During 2015, WCE facilitated three mentoring and community engagement activities involving 60 participants at Galiwin’ku. These activities were developed in collaboration with Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw (Yalu’) Aboriginal Corporation. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) was subsequently developed between CDU and Yalu’. This agreement was executed in December 2015 to support local program delivery through WCE. A further SLA was signed in 2016 (and later extended until May 2017) and included activities such as the research and recording of stories of educational journeys and education history; research training activities; mentoring of school students; skill development for mentors; support for Yolŋu teachers to complete teacher education studies; facilitation of education and pathway workshops; and the development of cultural induction package for non-Indigenous teachers. Yalu delivered all activities in collaboration with Shepherdson College. Both parties have indicated plans to continue working in partnership beyond the WCE initiative. In particular, the Principal and Deputy Principal have been extremely supportive of Yalu’s work within the school.

WCE staff were unable to travel to Galiwin’ku for over two months due to Cyclone Lam (February 2015) and Cyclone Nathan (March 2015). Cyclone Lam was a Category four cyclone and caused extensive damage to housing and infrastructure in Galiwin’ku (Elcho Island). In addition to broader traumatic impacts of this event, significant damage was done to the Yalu office. For two months, staff were working in a small demountable building, approximately 12 x 6 metres in size, and sharing the space with staff of two other programs. This brought huge challenges for the running of programs managed by the organisation, which included the WCE initiative. This environmental emergency affected the community engagement process ‘on the ground’ during the early stages of the initiative. Dr Maypilama travelled to Darwin to continue planning during this chaotic period. Community priorities were re-directed towards housing and infrastructure development at that time. In tandem, there were constant changes to school leadership during this period (i.e. ten different principals across the course of the first 18 months). These delays and constant changes were problematic, yet planning and implementation continued in consultation with community stakeholders. Targeted activities continued during this period. For example six Galiwin’ku students participated in a Menzies School of Health Research pathways program visit to Darwin. This involved discussions about career pathways in health, nursing and health research. It involved a series of practical exercises and site visits to CDU and Menzies. This activity was supported through WCE.
WCE staff were also involved in the launch of the **CDU, Menzies School of Health Research and Yalu’ Margithinyaraw MOU** launch in March 2016. This provides a means of partnership sustainability beyond the timeframe of the WCE initiative.

WCE staff attended the Cathy Freeman Awards at the Shepherdson College; a School Council meeting; and a graduation at the Shepherdson College for seven Yolŋu students who achieved their NTCET. Engagement in these events/meetings helped to build and sustain relationship development, networks and community-based actions.

**Shepherdson College Staff Mentoring Project**

During 2016, 32 students from Shepherdson College were involved in mentoring with Yalu’ staff – Evonne Mitjarrandi (Senior Mentor) and Beulah Munyarryun and Delvine Munyarryun (Junior Mentors) from June 2016 to November 2016. Students were drawn from years 5 to 8. This was a primary focus of work undertaken in Galwin’ku as part of the partnership developed with Yalu’. The mentoring was community-led and encouraged the students to be strong and confident, be respectful to their teachers, to help each other, and develop skills to do their school work. Support with reading and writing Yolŋu Matha and English languages were part of the mentoring sessions. The mentoring helped to address problems such as bullying, teasing and has helped students to be respectful and engage better in their learning. Students have been learning about employment and study pathways as part of the mentoring process as well. Students who were mentored during the period mentioned above demonstrated better behavior in class, more interest in their classroom learning activities and higher engagement with their teachers and peers. These students are also more aware of the importance of attending classes every day and completing their studies to be able to pursue further education. Dr Maypilama and Rosemary Gundjarranbuy, Manager of Yalu’ have both indicated that WCE ‘planted the seed’ in relation to discussions about higher education.

**Cultural Awareness Training (CAT)**

Yalu’ has organised and delivered a ten week Cultural Awareness Training (CAT) program delivered by Margaret Miller and Evonne Mitjarrandi. This was supported by two local cultural advisors (Elders – Dorothy Gapany and Daisy Gondarra) with participation of all teaching staff. The program developed to provide non-Indigenous teachers with increased knowledge about local Aboriginal culture and more in-depth information on cultural identity. The workshop discussions created better opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers/educators to learn how to work together respectfully and productively to embed indigenous knowledge and cultural practices into classroom activities. Total sessions and attendance are listed below:

- Week 1: 31 (12 Yolŋu teachers)
- Week 2: 22 (10 Yolŋu teachers)
- Week 3: 29 (15 Yolŋu teachers)
- Week 4: 26 (10 Yolŋu teachers)
- Week 5: 18 (6 Yolŋu teachers*)
- Week 6: 15 (5 Yolŋu teachers*)
- Week 7: 28 (14 Yolŋu teachers)
- Week 8: 38 (11 Yolŋu teachers)
- Week 9: 30 (10 Yolŋu teachers)
- Week 10: 32 (14 Yolŋu teachers)

*funeral and ceremonies
Yolŋu Assistant Teacher Workforce Development.

Another important aspect of the work led by Yalu’ included Yolŋu Assistant Teacher workforce development. This involved weekly meetings with the Yolŋu teachers every Friday from July to November 2016. As a result of these meetings, the Yolŋu teachers have written a collective statement containing elements of what they would like to see happening in the school (related to their work as Assistant Teachers). The document was produced in Yolŋu Matha. It identified important areas such as work with Balanda (non-Indigenous) teachers and parents regarding discipline of students; the dynamics of their team work with Balanda teachers (and how to create balance and harmony), how they (Assistant Teachers) can be more productive as well as assertive in the classroom, and other matters related to their own professional development. These are now a focus of discussions between Yalu (representing the Yolngu teachers) and school management. An experienced retired teacher, Ms Noela Hall, who taught at Galiwin’ku for 30 years, provided eight weeks of professional development and mentoring support to Yolngu teachers. These sessions were called Learning Together as Balanda teachers were also invited and encouraged to attend. The sessions were designed as a biliteracy program with the following aims: valuing, retaining and developing staff. The Learning Together sessions were considered professional development for teachers and it proved to be an engaging way for Balanda and Yolŋu teachers to strengthen their language skills. Total sessions and attendance are listed below:

- Session 1: 30 (17 Yolŋu teachers)
- Session 2: 34 (13 Yolŋu teachers)
- Session 3: 30 (4 Yolŋu teachers*)
- Session 4: 26 (14 Yolŋu teachers)
- Session 5: 25 (9 Yolŋu teachers) – some Yolŋu teachers were away attending training in Darwin *funeral and ceremonies

Note: Two cultural advisers (Elders) participated in all sessions - Dorothy Gapany and Daisy Gondarra.

As a result of Yalu’s work during mentoring, cultural awareness and Learning Together sessions, the following outcomes have been achieved: better engagement for team teachers (Balanda and Yolŋu); higher student engagement (for the ones participating in mentoring); more support to Yolŋu teachers who started to demonstrate more confidence and willingness to complete their studies as assistant teachers (Diploma and Bachelor Degree).

Community-Based Research

Community-based research was conducted by local Yolŋu researchers (one Senior and two younger researchers in training). Participants were asked to present their views on pathways to further education, challenges and aspirations for themselves and future generations. Findings present local view on what has worked well in their own education journey: in the past teachers used to put greater emphasis in writing and speaking Yolŋu Matha and English and local people who acquired a diploma or degree had increased confidence in achieving their career objectives. Challenges mentioned were not having academic English to pursue further education and having to leave community to further their studies while meeting cultural obligations. Recommendations given by interview participants included: continued student mentoring and Yolŋu teacher support in schools; case management arrangements between parents, teachers and school to support students with learning difficulties; learning content to be more engaging and culturally responsive; more support with English Literacy and Numeracy for students and community members. Eighteen individual interviews were conducted, which included three school graduates, two school teachers, seven parents and six other community members.
Throughout the WCE initiative there have also been discussions about the role and function of boarding schools. Concerns were raised in relation to boarding schools not effectively communicating with parents about the education pathways being offered. These have been documented but not actions were developed in relation to these findings.

*Rise UP Be Your Best, Own Your Future ™*

During 2017 Yalu Marnghinyaraw also implemented the *Rise UP Be Your Best, Own Your Future ™* program which provides the unique opportunity for Indigenous Australians to reflect on their distinctive lived reality and the issues they encounter on a daily basis. Yalu’s decision to participate in this program reflects their commitment to fostering a new generation of leaders in the community. The program engaged a group of young women who were previously involved in the Yalu Indigenous Parenting Support program and who have leadership aspirations, in order to strengthen their pathway to becoming community leaders of the future. Fifteen young women from Galiwin’ku who have aspirations for further education and career development were directly involved, as well a youth leader with a high public profile who is already achieving her study and career aspirations and who is an inspiration for many young women in Galiwin’ku.

The *Rise up* program facilitates critical thinking and self-reflection to encourage and support personal change and social transformation and encourages and empowers participants to strengthen: belief in self; self-confidence and self-worth; a positive attitude to “be your best, and to own your future”; informed decision making; resilience; and manage choices and change. The program has been created by a local Darwin-based Aboriginal business that already was known to and respected by the community.

The *Galiwin’ku WCE initiative Evaluation Report* is attached as Appendix 3.

### 5.2 Gunbalanya

Initial community-based consultation meetings were held with key Indigenous leaders, service providers and community stakeholders on 18 September, 24 October, and the 28-31 October 2014. This provided an opportunity to introduce the WCE initiative and to work towards an overarching agreement of participation. The Arrguluk Reference Group was identified as a key Indigenous group to guide the direction of the initiative and to provide ongoing links to community. An early success story included an invitation for WCE staff to participate in the inaugural Gunbalanya School *Careers Expo* for students in years 7 to 11. This was held on 24 October 2014. Students were provided with information about pathways into higher education and asked questions of the team.

WCE staff participated in the Sports Carnival at Jabiru, which provided an opportunity to engage and **mentor students** from both Maningrida and Gunbalanya. Other mentoring activities occurred throughout the WCE initiative on a one-to-one basis as opportunities arose. This included the location of an academic tutor for a local higher education student enrolled in a teaching degree, provision of education resources and equipment, linkage support, and information about education pathways. WCE staff invested significant time to support Child and Family Centre staff to address their study needs.

Intensive professional support was provided to Bininj Assistant Teachers by the Community Teacher Liaison Leader. A particular focus on improving digital literacy underpinned this work.

The WCE team developed a partnership with ARPNet to undertake **participatory research** with remote Indigenous families and young people in the region. Three research tools were used: Dillybag tools (with 10 men, 21 women), iPad interviews (with 18 men, 4 women), and Group interviews (with 11 men, 4 women). Of a total of 37 participants, 11 were Elders and 9 were young people. The report can be found at
West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC) invited WCE staff to meet with regional staff in Darwin overseeing training needs of 200+ staff (across 5 sites, including Gunbalanya and Maningrida) to identify ways to support their training plans.

Arrguluk Reference Group and Adjumarlarll Aboriginal Corporation worked collaboratively with the WCE team to identify ‘community actions’ to support education and training needs in the community. These were embedded in school planning processes, as Gunbalanya School transitioned into an Independent Government School.

The WCE team joined a newly established Youth Reference Group in Gunbalanya. Members represented a number of service providers in the community who provide support to youth around their education, mental health and wellbeing needs. This included discussions around supporting activities for older aged youth in community (through Youth Centre – e.g. culture camps, holiday programs) and linking with the new Indigenous young male staff member of Team Health who is talking with youth in community about ‘what they want to do now’.

A combined NAILSMA-WCE West Arnhem meeting was held with the school to discuss broadening training opportunities for senior aged students to include iTracker training (for new Outdoor Ed program), linking up with CDU Tourism VET Trainer to see if NAILSMA could support some of their units. Both organisations were invited to support Culture Days (16-19 May) and Career Expos (Oct/Nov 2016).

The WCE team linked with Nawarddeken Academy to discuss ways to capture the story of the development of this new ‘bush school’ to better support student school attendance in and out of the homelands. It has since received national media attention.

The WCE team supported the participation of the School Council Chair to attend the Joint School Council Gathering in Yirrkala in May 2016 to share and discuss educational visions for their remote Indigenous community members.

The WCE team planned and implemented a film project to document Youth Perspectives on Education in Gunbalanya. This was a collaborative project with West Arnhem Council and Team Health. It was undertaken with 9 youth (5 female, 4 male). Some youth spoke in their first language, which was later interpreted into English. Final edited versions of 5 of the youth filmed can be found at https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/communities/gunbalanya/gunbalanya-youth-perspectives-on-education/

In November 2016, the WCE team facilitated two youth (16-20+ yrs) to participate in a two day Remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit, followed by a 2 day Indigenous Leaders Conference in Darwin. One of these youth was interviewed by ABC News during this experience about his perspectives of children taken into care. He emphasised the importance of connection to culture and country during this interview.

Two articles were published in the WIRE - West Arnhem Regional Council Newsletter - about the workshops, youth film project and youth summit.

The WCE team conducted an interagency research workshop with 21 interagency staff from 8 key agencies to feedback research findings, to reflect on family and community perspectives on education (ARPnet research); and to facilitate the identification of community-based actions and solutions to strengthen higher education pathways. This resulted in the drafting of a Community Action Plan developed, with
actions of key agencies identified; professional development and mentoring of key community leaders and staff about higher education pathways and possibilities; dissemination and evaluation of research activities in community.

Over 500 meetings were facilitated by WCE staff and other agencies between Oct 2014 and Oct 2016.

The Gunbalanya WCE initiative Evaluation Report is attached as Appendix 4.

5.3 Maningrida

Maningrida College was engaged from the commencement of the WCE initiative through the recruitment and selection of the Community Teacher Liaison Leader role. Initial community-based consultation meetings were held with key Traditional Owners, Indigenous leaders, service providers and community stakeholders by WCE staff from 20-21 October 2014. This included the Government Engagement Coordinator, Indigenous Engagement Officer, Remote Jobs and Community Program (RJCP), School Leadership, BIITE training staff, and the manager and workers of the School Attendance team. This provided an opportunity to introduce the initiative and to work towards an overarching agreement to participate in the WCE. The School Attendance Officers team was identified as a key Indigenous group to guide the direction of the initiative and to provide ongoing links to community. They provided written evidence of their support.

During the early stages of planning and delivery the WCE team conducted three mentoring sessions (around education and career pathways in housing and teaching). Discussions with the Language and Culture Centre staff at Maningrida College were facilitated to build opportunities to collaborate with WCE to raise awareness about education pathways for young people. During this phase WCE staff in the West Arnhem region were increasingly being approached by community members who were interested in sharing their ‘education stories’ and the next steps in their education journeys.

The WCE met with 10 Homelands teachers and two Visiting Teachers (at the invitation of the Principal and Assistant Principal). Staff from these homelands schools were keen to share their stories and to discuss issues surrounding homelands education (e.g. how best to support education of up to 75 multi-aged children on one outstation during the dry season, with only one Homelands Teacher and one Visiting Teacher providing limited and occasional support).

Discussions about boarding school education were frequent at Maningrida. Many families were sending their children interstate for a ‘better education’. In consultation with the community, the WCE team explored ways to make information about boarding school options and scholarships more easily accessible. There are approximately 1500 young people under 24 years old that live in Maningrida; community members have started asking them ‘where are you going to go, what options are available for you?’

The local GREATS Youth Leadership Committee (YLC) worked closely with the WCE team. It comprises 20+ young people and has monthly meetings, including discussions around training ideas and needs that support the education ‘goals’ set out in their 2016 YLC plan; connecting with Tennant Creek Youth Group; consultations with young community members in collaboration with youth workers; potential collaborative workshops and contributed ideas for the Indigenous Leaders Conference held at CDU in November 2016. They also met with the entire WCE team during a trip to Maningrida in July 2016.

The WCE team regularly connected with the Community Development Program (CDP), which included teams of 20+ workers. This assisted with identifying training needs to support work activities in
community. An attempt was made by the WCE team to broker training delivery between CDU and BIITE to fulfil identified training needs through the former CDP (RJCP) in Maningrida but this was unsuccessful. Lack of responsiveness and inadequate business systems, by both CDU and BIITE, were identified as limiting factors. This was a missed opportunity.

The WCE team received an invitation to join a newly established Interagency Reference Group from June 2016. This provided an opportunity to include higher education and training as a critical part of local inter-agency discussions.

The WCE team worked closely with the Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network (ARPNet) who facilitated research about higher education pathways. Two separate research tools were used: Dillybag tools (with 6 men, 15 women) and iPad interviews (with 24 men, 18 women). Of a total of 63 participants, 10 were Elders and 15 were young people. This research was produced into a community-level research report and used to inform further consultations and the development of a Community Action Plan owned by the local community. This can be found at https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/uploads/assets/uploads/HEPPP_WCE_ARPNET__REPORT_MANINGRIDA_AUGUST_2016.pdf

The WCE team conducted four sets of research workshops with 30 school teaching staff; 18 Yuya Bol (Indigenous teaching and general staff members); 8 Interagency staff from 5 key agencies; and 10 Board members, Elders and Traditional Owners. The intent of these workshops was to feedback research findings, to reflect on family and community perspectives on education (ARPnet research); and to facilitate the identification of community-based actions and solutions to strengthen higher education pathways. This resulted in a draft Community Action Plan developed, with actions of key agencies identified; professional development and mentoring of key community leaders and staff about higher education pathways and possibilities; dissemination and evaluation of research activities in community.

The WCE team facilitated the attendance of CDU staff to provide educational pathways information on Market Day as part of the Lurra Festival in Maningrida.

The WCE team facilitated the participation of seven staff from partner organisations (from CDU, BIITE, Menzies and NAILSMA) to provide education pathways information at a two-day Career Expo for more than 50 middle and senior school students from Maningrida, Milingimbi, Ramingining and approximately 10 CDP workers from Gunbalanya. This involved over 200 Maningrida community members/staff from key agencies.

WCE supported the participation of two School Council staff to attend the Joint School Council Gathering in Yirrkala in May 2016. This provided an opportunity for them to share and discuss educational visions for their remote Indigenous community members.

Over 50 community members over the duration of the WCE initiative have been mentored and supported to build their understanding and aspiration to continue their education.

In November 2016, the WCE team facilitated five youth (aged 13-20+yrs) from Maningrida to participate in a two day Remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit in Darwin. This summit was pre-conference activity of the 2016 Indigenous Leaders Conference, Engagement and the power of choice, held at CDU.

This resulted in 2 male teens (one who participated in the summit and conference and his brother) now exploring university courses with a view to commencing higher education study next year.

WCE staff nominated the Senior Youth Worker for the Minister for Territory Families Excellence in Youth Leadership Award.
An article was published in the WIRE - West Arnhem Regional Council Newsletter - about local participation in the workshops and youth summit.

Educational metaphors were developed and used throughout the WCE initiative, This included a ‘dingo’ metaphor (activity hunting – wanting to learn new things); and ‘rain’ (pathways created when the rain hits the earth).

Over 700 meetings were facilitated by WCE staff and other agencies between Oct 2014 and Oct 2016.

The Maningrida WCE initiative Evaluation Report is attached as Appendix 5.

5.4 Tennant Creek

Initial discussions commenced in early October 2014, with community-based consultations between the WCE team and relevant community leaders and agencies occurring between 27-30 October 2014. Meetings took place for example with the Tennant creek CDU campus Manager and other staff, the CEO of Barkly Shire Council, the CEO Barkly Arts, the Principal Tennant Creek High School, the Mayor Barkly Shire Council, the Regional Director Barkly Group Schools and the Assistant Regional Director Barkly Group Schools. WCE staff conducted semi-structured interviews within relevant agencies and local institutions, students and key community leaders. A local Reference Group was established soon after with multiple meetings throughout the course of the initiative. The grup was composed of an Indigenous Engagement Officer, Warumungu Elder, Aboriginal Interpreter Service, Anyinginyi Board Member/Stronger Families, Anyinginyi Council rep, Julilikari Board rep. and Northern Territory Government. The WCE initiative was also formally tabled at a Barkly Regional Council meeting and supported by local Councillors.

Support Indigenous Boarding Students

Initial efforts were invested in developing a relationship with the local Aboriginal Hostel in Tennant Creek to support Indigenous boarding students from surrounding communities to have a positive education experience. This partnership was abandoned after multiple changes with management of the hostel and after receiving advice that the partnership with WCE staff was not an organisational priority for Aboriginal Hostels at that point in time.

Nyinkka Nyunyu Art & Culture Centre

A strong partnership was successfully developed with both the staff and management of the local Nyinkka Nyunyu Art & Culture Centre throughout the initiative to ensure a culturally safe space was accessible to staff and WCE participants. The WCE team has an office based in the culture centre and worked from there most days. This meant WCE staff had a direct connection with community members whilst they were working and talking about higher education. The culture centre is running an onsite hospitality training course through CDU Alice Springs campus.
Youth and Elders Connecting

In November 2015, a Youth and Elders Connecting event was facilitated by the WCE team and key community partners in Tennant Creek. It took place at the Nyinkka Nyunyu Art & Culture Centre. This attracted 19 participants involving 11 elders and eight youth. This gathering came about due to a genuine recognition among local Elders that youth needed to engage better with culture and kinship systems; and that local youth wanted to learn more about local language and culture. Facilitating a safe environment for elders and youth to share stories about education journeys – using both Western and Indigenous knowledge systems - was considered to be important. This youth and elders event event was one way of connecting youth and elders to talk about higher education and the importance of language and culture as a grounding for youth educational journey’s.

Local school staff have repeatedly stated to WCE staff that they felt “poorly prepared” to deal with the cultural and community challenges they face. The WCE team has worked solidly to increase engagement with local schools, particularly with the Tennant Creek High School, Tennant Creek Primary School and Alekarenge School.

Tennant Creek High School

Activities with Tennant Creek High School have included five staff forums which were facilitated by WCE to enable interested teachers to discuss challenges, strategies and community engagement. One session with the high school teachers involved talking about the use of cultural metaphors in the classroom and asking questions of the teachers about the importance of Aboriginal teachers in the classroom, the need for English LLN support, and ways to incorporate language and culture into the high school environment. All of the teachers’ ideas were recorded in writing and the whole session was recorded by SBS for use in a documentary about supporting new teachers into remote settings in the NT. The documentary ‘Testing Teachers’ has since been aired on SBS in 2017 with Tennant Creek included as one of the case studies. These staff forums led to teachers from the high school contacting the WCE team directly to visit their classes and speak with students about local history, culture, Indigenous human rights and examples drawn from their own pathways into higher education. Community-based staff presented on three separate occasions to classes on the topics outlined above. One presentation on slavery in the region elicited a very positive response from the school – teachers and students alike were very moved by the discussion. This was also recorded as part of the SBS documentary ”Testing Teachers’. After discussions between Tennant Creek High School management around the importance of engaging with the local Indigenous community, and following on from the staff forums and in-class sessions about different aspects of Indigenous culture, two new Indigenous positions were created at the school to provide cultural mentoring for students.

In addition, WCE staff worked closely with the Careers Advisor at the Tennant Creek High School. The Careers Advisor attended the CDU Careers Advisor Day in April 2016 with additional financial support provided through the WCE initiative to facilitate this process. The WCE team noted that “She understands the importance of giving students a first-hand university experience”, since “many remote students prefer hands on experiences rather than viewing web content”.

Tennant Creek Primary School

At the Tennant Creek Primary School there were two WCE-led teacher forums to explore “teaching challenges” and “new ways of solving problems”; and two sessions with teachers delivering culture lessons through art and story-telling. The Tennant Creek Primary School has since increased its Indigenous staff allocation. While this was seen to be a “positive” by WCE Indigenous staff, they commented that “not all engagements are local” and noted that employing local, qualified people may have advantages – particularly around language and culture when teaching at the school.
Indigenous representation on School Councils

In addition, WCE has worked with Tennant Creek High School and Tennant Creek Primary School to increase Indigenous representation on the School Councils. As a result there was an increase in Indigenous school council representation from 1 to 5 Indigenous members at Tennant Creek High School; and from 0 to 1 at Tennant Creek Primary School during 2016. This is a significant shift in Indigenous educational governance in the region. However, some representatives reported feeling “exposed and isolated” in these roles towards the end of WCE.

Alekarenge School

Alekarenge School is located 170km south of Tennant Creek in the community of Alekarenge, within the Warrabri Aboriginal Land Trust. The population of Alekarenge is approximately 600, drawn predominantly from the Warumungu, Kaytetye, Alyawarr and Warlpiri language groups. At the invitation of the school the WCE team visited the community 4 times in order to deliver or assist with numerous activities including: support for two family fun days; engaging students about the importance of education; three classroom support sessions around history and culture; and three teacher forums to explore teaching challenges and new ways of solving problems. Teachers report that this has “encouraged more reflective practice”. In particular, a WCE community-based staff member spoke about her own educational journey from Ali Curung (Alekarenge) Primary School to now applying to do her Masters’ in Education. She spoke to a group of primary school students about her pathway.

Careers Expo

In late 2016, the Tennant Creek WCE team participated in a Careers Expo involving more than 60 students enquiring about study options. There was interest in both VET and HE pathways with VET attracting approximately 60% of enquiries. The expo also facilitated the establishment of a new partnership between the senior school teachers and CDU lecturers to engage via video-link.

Youth Mentoring

Five in-depth case studies of successful youth mentoring have been documented in Tennant Creek. These helped to demonstrate the diverse mentoring expertise required across the region. Aspirations for music, health and education higher education qualifications have been documented. In addition, WCE staff, Geoffrey Shannon and Valda Shannon, both commenced studies in a Master of Public Policy and Master of Education respectively. They have stated that WCE “reinvigorated their interest in study”.

Partnership Focus

From June to November 2016, WCE staff had 56 meetings with various community organisations and government agencies in the region to discuss the educational landscape in the region with particular focus on the barriers and challenges to good educational outcomes that facilitate youth taking up further study. A focus on working in partnership to improve educational outcomes has underpinned this work. Examples are provided below:

1. There were several attempts to connect the Tennant Creek Youth Leadership Group with the Maningrida Youth Group as part of the WCE initiative. This came to fruition through the delivery of the Remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit (RIYLS) held in November 2016. Three youth from the region attended the Remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit in November 2016. This included youth currently disengaged from study. Two representatives contributed to a panel discussion about the educational aspirations of Indigenous youth during the Indigenous Leaders’ Conference. The visit sparked interest in a number of potential study areas including arts, music, environment, health and various trades.
2. The intention is that these community relationships developed, and interest generated during WCE will that the young people involved will continue to meet and to flourish beyond the completion of the WCE initiative. For example: The WCE mentor also supported three youth group members to submit applications to the NT Chief Ministers Round Table and two of these applications were successful. The two youth representatives now attend these meetings regularly.

3. The WCE team has worked closely with the Patta Aboriginal Corporation who administers land on behalf of the Patta Warumungu people. Their ownership was recognised by the Tennant Creek No.2 decision of September 2007. The corporation also seeks to provide leadership in terms of overall community development in the region including education and socio-economic development. Collaborative work with WCE has included updating the membership register and dealing with non-compliant members; support for the November AGM; exploring ways Patta can help unify the broader development of the region and influence education and training outcomes; and working on collective effort to address the substantial challenges facing the community as a whole. The Chairperson, Richard James, has expressed his appreciation for WCE support in getting Patta “up and running” again.

4. There has been a strengthening of partnerships with the NT Department of Education over a number of facets. This includes the work with the schools, which encompasses teacher forums and classroom support, resource development and community engagement. We have maintained regular dialogue with the Regional Director about our work in the Barkly region with the three schools, Tennant Creek Primary School, Tennant Creek High School and Alekarenge Primary School. In the latter half of 2016 the WCE team led discussions about proposed broader regional reforms including issues based around increased cultural relevance and improved indigenous governance; changes to local education practices; language, literacy and numeracy ‘catch-up’; system reforms; and community development. The Department linguist has also continued to work with WCE staff around embedding language and culture classes into the school. She is supporting the organisation of a Warumungu Conference in 2017.

5. Papulu Apparr-kari (PAK), the Indigenous language centre in Tennant Creek, is responsible for the preservation, maintenance, and revival of the 16 indigenous languages of the Barkly Region. They currently run the Remote School Attendance Strategy (RSAS) to support parents (or carers or guardians) to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are enrolled in school and attending school regularly. WCE staff have regularly engaged PAK and explored opportunities for working together. This included: a) working with youth and substance misuse services to provide better drug and alcohol education programs to the schools; and b) strengthening the Family as First Teachers approach in local communities and c) influencing NT curriculum development to make it more inclusive and welcoming.

6. PAK is also open to working on apps for the six main language groups. Using a local community development model it is possible to build language and culture applications to work on a range of devices including iPhone. There is some capacity to do it locally but additional support would fast-track the process. During its' association with WCE PAK recognised that there is scope for much better integration with the school system to deliver language and cultural support projects. In particular, more translation could be done for school materials in both written and audio formats to make information more accessible. Progress on this is unknown at time of writing.

**Other Stakeholder Interactions:**

- Regular meetings have been held between WCE and the local Indigenous Engagement Officer within **Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet**. Discussions have revolved around key themes relating to culture and governance; curriculum development; and employment prospects.
• The WCE team continued to meet with Catholic Care to continue their work in the schools around embedding language and culture classes embedded into the schools.

• Meetings have been facilitated between BIITE, CDU and the Department of Health to work together to support Indigenous students interested in primary health care; and to strengthen VET in schools opportunities in Primary Health Care and Disability support worker training.

Documented feedback from general community members and reference group members indicate that youth in Tennant Creek are starting to talk about more study and are interested in University pathways because of the WCE work in Tennant Creek. The numbers are still very small but interest is growing.

The Tennant Creek and Alekarenge Evaluation Report is attached as Appendix 6.

5.5 Yirrkala

Initial Consultations

WCE organised a meeting with a number of community and education leaders in Yirrkala on 20 May 2014 to introduce WCE initiative concepts (prior to the formal commencement of the WCE initiative). It was decided at that meeting to organise a further meeting to include more interested community members, BITTE and DoE. A further meeting/workshop was held on 30 June 2014 in Yirrkala. Further meetings were held on 29 and 30 October 2014. Key community leaders responded very positively to the project and agreed to establish a local Yolŋu working group for the WCE initiative. Key themes that emerged during early consultation included wvaluing bi-lingual teaching and recognising its success, wtraining and education needs to be more directly linked to employment outcomes and linked to higher education, and woportunites to work more closely with CDU to combine Indigenous and non-Indigenous expertise in school and post school education. A number of additional consultation meetings took place in Yirrkala on 3rd and 4th November 2014. These meetings developed the priorities into a workable framework and set down the formal process to seek endorsement from the community more broadly.

School Mentoring

A series of mentoring activities aimed at coaching eight people to lead student mentoring in the Yirrkala School were delivered throughout 2016. Enrolling in a course of study to enhance the existing skills of these mentors was a requirement of these positions.

Joint School Council Gathering

During 4th to 6th May 2016, the WCE team in partnership with the Yambirrpa Schools Council, held a Joint School Council Gathering in Yirrkala which brought together 19 community leaders/school council representatives from the six WCE communities. Those present at this gathering agreed that “Strengthening education governance and leadership in remote and very remote schools is a key foundation for improving Indigenous* education journeys for children and youth in the Northern Territory (NT).” The joint school council gathering provided a safe environment for school council representatives to share stories and acknowledge the challenges and successes of school councils across the NT. The joint school council gathering included 20 Indigenous and 4 non-Indigenous representatives from: Yambirrpa Schools Council; Shepherdson College School Council; Maningrida College Council; Gunbalanya School Council; Yuendumu School Council; Tennant Creek High School Council; Tennant Creek Primary School Council; Charles Darwin University; and the Northern Territory Department of Education A Collective School Council Statement on Remote Indigenous Education was a key deliverable from this gathering. (Appendix 7)
Community-based Graduation Celebration

In May 2016, CDU staff were involved in a community-based graduation celebration for four students including Mrs Yalmay Yunupingu who graduated with a Bachelor in Learning and Teaching from CDU. Six CDU staff wore academic regalia for this occasion which came about as a result of a partnership between Yambirrpa Schools Council and CDU. This ceremony, alongside a similar event in Yuendumu, initiated a process to develop a remote community-based graduation celebration policy as a means to increase community aspirations to pursue further education. This is currently under review by CDU executives.

The SLA with Yambirrpa Schools Council

WCE staff working in Yirrkala have built a strong partnership with the Yirrkala School and the Yirrkala Homelands School. This led to the formulation of a SLA between the WCE team and Yambirrpa Schools Council. This agreement was negotiated with, and approved by the Yambirrpa School Council and signed in Yirrkala on 5 May 2016 by the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership and the School Council Chair. The SLA contains a number of activities in Yirrkala (and homelands). This included the coordination of education-related activities undertaken in community; mentoring and pathway development towards higher education; workforce development through Yolŋu teacher support; Yolŋu Matha language application; the scoping of potential for iBooks and video production, including online learning options; research and training that engages Yolŋu teachers studying an advanced diploma; support for customising the locally delivered workplace training and assessment course to be culturally appropriate; sharing insights and building sustainable foundations; and showcasing and celebrating WCE activities in the community.

A CDU Indigenous undergraduate student studying education was introduced to the community and Yirrkala school to learn about bi-lingual education and to mentor students as an Indigenous role model.

Community-Driven Research – The Yambirrpa Fish Trap Metaphor and the Garma Metaphor

Community-driven research has been taking place in relation to the Yambirrpa fish trap metaphor. Stories about the fish trap and the cultural concepts around the Yambirrpa metaphor were collected. This metaphor and the Garma metaphor are the guiding concepts for the educational work of CDU and the two Yambirrpa schools in Yirrkala. These concepts are used by the community to articulate education from a Yolŋu perspective and how important culture is in the education space. According to Dr Marika (2008) the Yambirrpa (fish trap) is a metaphor for giving, sharing, and building strong relationships in the community and school. The fish trap is secure and sound so no fish can escape, like keeping the kids in the school together. The rocks can be seen as the foundation and the elders sitting there who hold that place together and look after the education interests of the school. This helps the school council and the teachers maintain and deliver strong Yolŋu and Ŋapaki (non-Yolŋu) education.

Yambirrpa represents a philosophy and process that WCE staff in Yirrkala used throughout the WCE initiative. The building of the Yambirrpa and the teamwork involved ensured that students, teachers, CDU, BIITE, the Northern Territory (NT) Department of Education and the community were building strong foundations together towards a sustainable learning ground that intertwines Yolŋu and Ŋapaki knowledges. Refer to Appendix 7 for further information.

Garma Festival – CDU

CDU participated in Garma Festival. This included the Yirrkala Community Engagement Leader, Program Manager, Indigenous Undergraduate Student and Community-Based staff. The Vice Chancellor also attended with a delegation of most senior executives. A CDU exhibition stall was facilitated by WCE and CDU staff for the Garma Festival. This exhibition was co-located with the Yirrkala School and provided
engagement and pathway information about WCE activities as well as CDU and BI courses. Posters developed collaboratively by Yirrkala Community Leaders and WCE staff were showcased and a ‘dream-catching’ activity was provided for young people, which involved drawing pictures about their ambitions for the future after finishing school. These pictures were drawn on six metres of calico and presented back to the community.

A video has been developed by the Yirrkala School as part of the CDU/WCE and Yambirrpa Schools Council service agreement to convey the story about the Yirrkala School history. This was deemed an important activity for documenting the strong bilingual education history of Yirrkala School.

**Yolŋu Teacher Training and Professional Development**

WCE team supported the mentoring of students by community leaders as part of the WCE activities under the SLA. Up to 15 students in year ten, eleven and twelve have been involved in mentoring as part of a program to learn more about higher education options.

The CDU Yirrkala office was under a caretaker arrangement with the Yirrkala Homelands School for 2016. This office was constantly in use as a training and education facility by the community. In tandem, a dedicated room for WCE was set up over this period in the Yirrkala School to provide an alternative space for WCE campus and community staff to collaborate and fulfil activities under the SLA.

Three people from Yirrkala Community attended the WCE Remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit and the Indigenous Leaders Conference as part of the Indigenous Leaders Conference held at CDU in November 2016. This included one Community Leader who is also a WCE staff member, and two developing young Indigenous leaders. A presentation was conducted at the Indigenous Leaders Conference by two WCE staff members and a young developing community leader. This presentation was on metaphors used in the Yirrkala School and community to explain Western concepts.

WCE staff have facilitated discussions and consultations with community leaders and stakeholders in Yirrkala and the nearby town of Nhulunbuy to ascertain future partnership opportunities with CDU and other organisations to sustain and continue the strengths of WCE. A language app project led by the University of Melbourne builds on these discussions.

**Music Mentoring Workshop**

A four day Music Mentoring Workshop was organised and delivered in December 2016 when two secondary students with some music skills from Yirrkala School and 4 local mentors from Yirrkala travelled to CDU music school and an Aboriginal Radio studio in Darwin to write and record original songs and learn production skills. This workshop provided students who are currently disengaged from school to gain knowledge, experience and practical outcomes such as song writing and recording and mentoring other young people. The workshop also involved CDU arts and music lecturers. This workshop represented a direct approach to support ‘vulnerable’ young men who have experienced major family issues. They have been mentored and supported to consider further study in Art and Music, gain experience and achieve tangible outcomes through the recordings – whilst receiving support in a safe environment.

Since WCE began in Yirrkala there has been an increase in interest and awareness of tertiary education in Yirrkala. Community leaders and members involved in WCE were observed talking more about pathways and the difference between VET and higher education and how they go about studying at CDU/BIITE. This has resulted in questions about courses and student accommodation.

The Yirrkala WCE initiative Evaluation Report: Rom-manapanmi ga dhinthun djalkiri bathala dhukarr (working together and tracking pathways towards higher education) is attached as Appendix 7.
5.6 Yuendumu

Initial community-based consultations were facilitated between 7-9 October and 20-22 October 2014 with local stakeholders, agencies, service providers and community leaders in education. A combined visit between CDU and the WCE Team and was conducted between 24-26 November 2014.

In 2015, the WCE team was involved in the preparation and delivery of an inaugural Yuendumu community-based Graduation Celebration and a Careers Expo. A vast range of local stakeholders from the Yuendumu community collaborated to deliver this event. Major stakeholders included the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation, PAW Media, Central Desert Regional Council, Yuendumu School, BIITE, Central Land Council, Centrecorp, Yuendumu Women’s Centre, World Vision, Warlukurlangu Artists Association, Yuendumu Old People Program, Yuendumu Mediation Centre, Northern Territory Government, Yuendumu Mining Company, Northern Territory Police, Remote Jobs and Community Program (RJCP), Child and Family Centre and Whole of Community Engagement initiative staff from CDU. This event celebrated the achievements of 80 graduates completing a VET certificate over the past two years; and recognised the work and commitment of over 103 local employees.

A second community level graduation celebration was held again in Yuendumu in November 2016. This involved a partnership with the Yuendumu School, BIITE and the WCE team. It included recognition of local education and training achievements with formal presentations to students in academic regalia. Mr Simon Fisher was awarded an Honorary University Fellow by CDU at that celebration to recognise his contribution to Warlpiri research and the WCE initiative. This also provided the impetus for CDU to develop a draft regional and remote graduation celebrations policy.

Community School Safety Program

From 2015 through to 2017 a Community School Safety Program was implemented which involved a partnership between the Yuendumu School, WCE team and the Yuendumu Mediation and Justice Centre (Central Desert Regional Council). The core activities of the Community School Safety Program included a school lunch-time duty roster; classroom behaviour management assistance; one-to-one student support, mediations among students; mediations involving parents and teachers; and workshops on conflict resolution, building health relationships, bullying, and cyber safety issues.

A trial of the Community School Safety Program drew on a pool of approximately 20 experienced mediators facilitated through the Yuendumu Mediation and Justice Centre. This trial led to a formalised service agreement between CDU and the Central Desert Regional Council, specifically the Yuendumu Mediation Centre. Mediators generally attended the school when they were available and willing to do so. While this did not provide a regularity of presence, it provided a means of elders with high leadership responsibilities a means of engaging with the school, lending their cultural authority to make the school a safer place. They mediated arguments, mentored young people and conducted family in-school mediations where appropriate. On certain ‘problem days’ the school contacted the coordinator to provide mediators as needed. The Principal of Yuendumu School reported that results to date show that regular presence of Warlpiri mentors add significant value to supporting both existing programs and a two-ways model of education. Average weekly student attendance rates in Term 1 2016 had increased by 12% compared to activity recorded in Term 1 2015. As a result the school has added an extra primary class (reported by Team Leader).
As a result of this increase in attendance the school added an extra primary class. For the period from 1 June to 30 November 2016 (a period of 96 schools days) the following data was gathered:

Days attended by mediators: 53; Classrooms assisted: 53; Fights resolved: 9; 1 on 1 Support/Counselling: 14; Family mediations: 83.

The Yuendumu Mediation Centre reported that the service has built confidence in the pool of mediators (approximately 30, including extended networks), working with young people.

A flow on effect from the Community School Safety Program has resulted in a partnership development with the Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC), in which mediation is now offered on a weekly basis to address the harmful behaviours of youth (at time of writing). As a result, the Yuendumu School has built a partnership with WYDAC to support the disengaged youth in the Yuendumu community. This WCE action has strengthened community networks of family authority and responsibility and assisted with building harmonious inter-agency collaboration. This work has also led to the planning and delivery of leadership workshops to be held in-school as well as out bush at the request of local Elders.

The Walpiri Research Centre

The WCE team has been supporting the establishment of the Warlpiri Research Centre (WRC) with a focus on building capacity in Indigenous research. This is a sustainable program that will be maintained after the cessation of the WCE initiative through Warlpiri Media Association (WMA) trading as PAW Media and Communications. WCE community-based staff designed a research project to show how building capacity in Indigenous research can strengthen pathways to higher education. The research project involved interviewing approximately 20 Warlpiri leaders/elders on camera on key issues surrounding both Indigenous education and leadership. The interviews were edited and a 20 minute production was compiled entitled: ‘Warlpiri Research – a journey to higher education.’ This can be accessed via https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/communities/yuendumu/learning-spaces/. This production is a valuable resource for use to start conversations on the importance of literacy and numeracy, bilingual-bicultural education and Indigenous leadership. These concepts are considered imperatives to strengthening pathways to higher education from a Warlpiri perspective. This video was screened at the Indigenous Leaders Conference at CDU on Thursday 10 November 2016.

Warlpiri elders used the WRC researchers to strengthen partnerships with Universities. In 2016, a collaboration developed between Warlpiri researchers and Professor Linda Barwick, musicologist, Sydney Conservatorium of Music University of Sydney, to conduct the ‘Supporting Vitality in Warlpiri Songs’ project, which aims to analyse the maintenance of cultural practices in a rapidly changing world. This research involves the employment of both Simon Fisher and Valerie Martin, formalised in a three year contract. In addition, PAW Media has acquired funding from Granites Mines Affected Areas Aboriginal Corporation (GMAAAC) to conduct Indigenous research activity including the archival digitisation project and the repatriation of the Olive Pink Collection from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Institute (AIATSIS) and the National Museum of Australia. Negotiation for the repatriation of the Olive Pink Collection commenced with the respective institutions in June 2015 and approval was granted in March 2016.

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3 This data was gathered on sign-off when mediators completed their shift at 3pm. At times, the mediators forgot to fill in their reports so there may be some under reporting.
In April 2016, a group of eight Indigenous researchers visited AIATSIS and the National Museum of Australia to examine anthropological papers, 800 photographs and 80 artefacts for repatriation. All material was repatriated to the WRC established under the WCE. This project was led by Mr Simon Fisher, a WCE community-based staff member. Commencing in 2017, research activity will be conducted at the WRC to utilise the archival material that has been digitised under the archival digitisation project. WCE has facilitated some of these negotiations, especially in relation to ethics and adhering to Indigenous protocols.

**On-site Accredited Training**

WCE community based staff have collaborated with WYDAC, BIITE and the Central Land Council (CLC) to ensure that onsite accredited training is provided to the Yuendumu Community. The Jaru Learning Centre comprises a partnership arrangement between the three above-mentioned partners; however, in 2016, WYDAC won the tender to manage the Jaru Learning Centre in 2017. Currently, the Jaru focuses on providing LLN activities to youth and adults. The WCE community based staff negotiated with BIITE to maintain its role in the community to deliver accredited training in Yuendumu through working closely with local stakeholders.

**Mentored Youth Groups**

WCE community-based staff also mentored youth groups (comprising approximately 6 women and 6 men) at the Jaru Learning Centre. This was also established as a sustainable project beyond the life of WCE initiative. WCE community-based staff have engaged many families of Yuendumu to examine parent/family and community educational needs. Through this extensive engagement, leaders of the Yuendumu community regularly approached WCE community-based staff for ongoing discussion around leadership and educational aspirations. Neighbouring communities Willowra and Mt Allen expressed great interest in the ethos of the WCE initiative. As a result, Yuendumu community based staff have performed outreach activities to meet regional educational needs.

**Yuendumu School Council**

WCE campus-based staff had informed the Yuendumu School Council that its constitution of 1987 was in breach of current education regulation. Since this facilitation, the Yuendumu School Council has worked closely with COGSO and updated its constitution to meet current standards. With the assistance of the WCE team the Yuendumu School Council now currently functions on a full complement of representatives, following years of not being able to attain a quorum. The WCE facilitated partnership development between the Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE) program operated by the Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) and the Yuendumu School. This collaboration has resulted in a significant increase in parental participation on the Yuendumu School Council. The strengthening of the Yuendumu School Council also involved lodging a submission to the review of the Education Act (NT) that proposed that the term ‘parent of a child’ recognises Aboriginal customary law and tradition in relation to the responsibility of a child. Subsequently, this definition was legislated into the Education Act (NT) 2015 when passed in December 2015.

**Warlpiri Education Board (WEB)**

The WCE initiative has strengthened the work of the Warlpiri Education Board (WEB) through partnership development and community consultation. This is a sustainable project to support the long-term aspirations of the Warlpiri Education Board. Extensive consultations with senior leaders were conducted by the WCE community-based staff in December 2015. As a result, the Yuendumu Lease Working Group passed a resolution in 2016 to contribute operational funding to WEB.
Ngurlu (damper seed) Metaphor

WCE community-based staff draw on the metaphor ngurlu (damper seed), which relates to the concept of ‘planting of the seed’. This is a conceptual metaphor that draws parallels to the journey to higher education from a Warlpiri perspective. Geraldine Dixon created two artworks: ‘Ngurlu (damper seeds)’. Both paintings depict the germination of seeds into plant life after rain. The sprouting of new grasses is a metaphorical reference for new dimensions of learning, referring to the alternate education journey between non-Indigenous and Indigenous knowledge systems. This story has been incorporated into the community level evaluation report and an original painting depicting the metaphor has been gifted to the Office of Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at CDU. This is now displayed prominently in the office of the PVC-IL as a reflection of the ongoing partnership between CDU and the Yuendumu community.

Activities during 2017

Yuendumu Mediation and Justice (YM&J) successfully delivered services as per the agreement with CDU/WCE throughout 2016. Some unexpended funds remained due to periods where school was not running/mediators were away. These funds were approved for delivery in 2017 along the same criteria, however the feedback from the school is that the school as a whole is significantly more settled in 2017 and does not need the regular presence of mediators at lunchtime. As there was less need for mediation, it was expected that outreach and family mediation costs to go down as well. As a result the following activities were implemented:

Leadership Workshop

The School and WYDAC identified the need for students to have their own representatives to engage with decision making at the school. YM&J used a proportion of the remaining funds for a ‘Leadership Workshop’ to facilitate the process of identifying, nominating and training youth representatives for leadership in partnership with WYDAC and the School. Mediators worked closely with the school as well as WYDAC’s Jaru Pirrjidi youth leaders to find a culturally appropriate process for selecting and supporting these emerging leaders. This initiative was deemed to be in accordance with the purpose and parameters of the existing funding agreement.

Outreach/School Mediations

The School requested YM&J to conduct bush trips with kids that are not engaging in regular school attendance and discussions took place with a number of elders to discuss feasibility and planning (unknown at time of writing whether this bush trip took place beyond initial consultations). School mediations continued to be conducted on an as needs basis (these needs are envisioned to be less demanding than last year).

Workshop for Non-Violent Communication

Two local elders who have trained as mediators (and who had been active in the School partnership) were recently awarded scholarships to study Non-Violent Communication (NVC) at the International Intensive Training in Bali in May 2017. WCE made a financial contribution to enable their participation.

This undertaking – applying NVC to Warlpiri – builds on the prior experience of the YM&J program of adapting mainstream skills and understanding to a Warlpiri context. The development of the program was itself developed (in partnership with the Darwin Community Justice Centre) to train elders in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms that could be adapted to fit a Warlpiri worldview. The NVC training enhances the ability of local leaders to work with school staff as part of the Social and Emotional
Wellbeing program. It was envisaged this will create a safer and more supportive school environment, where students and staff are encouraged to reflect on their feelings and communicate their needs effectively. This, in turn, will support kids to attend school more regularly and increase the likelihood of transitions into higher education over the longer term. It also means that people wanting to pursue higher education will be more equipped to handle the interpersonal challenges that can act as a barrier to further education.

The Jaru Learning Centre, Yuendumu

The learning centre in Yuendumu from early 2017 is being managed in 2017 by the Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) and funded by the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust. The main outcome areas are: accredited training; non-formal education; informal learning, Warlpiri language and literacy, and non-formal, community-based education. This community-grown centre has been recognised as a model worth learning about and the Centre was invited to present at the Indigenous Leaders Conference - pre-conference workshop on Indigenous adult LLN organised by the WCE in November 2016. A case study on the Centre which includes recommendations to guide design, establishment and management of adult learning centres in other parts of the NT has also been funded through the SPP on LLN.

The Yuendumu WCE initiative Evaluation Report: Yapalurlangu-lirnpa (engaging the Warlpiri people) is attached as Appendix 8).
6.0 Community level, outputs and outcomes led by NAILSMA

NAILSMA Ltd were engaged by CDU as an expert organisation in the Indigenous land and sea management sector to identify opportunities for remote Indigenous student and adult learners to participate in higher education, specifically related to land and sea management.

NAILSMA’s component of the WCE initiative builds on its existing program of work and network of relationships with Indigenous communities engaged in land and sea management. NAILSMA set out to identify and work with existing programs and utilise existing partnerships with organisations, service providers and government agencies operating in these communities.

NAILSMA worked with a sub-section in each of the six communities that related to land and sea management. Generally, this included locally Ranger groups, local schools, Traditional Owners and Senior Elders. Each community was asked to identify areas that they would like to see supported in the context of education, training and career development. Project Management Plans were developed for each community over a period of up to six months to identify and clearly communicate each project’s objectives. These outlined each of the activities to be delivered in each of the communities and were used throughout the project to track each project’s progress.

NAILSMA uses land and sea management based activities as an attraction and engagement tool to achieve employment-ready training and higher education participation outcomes, including improved numeracy and literacy, attendance, and higher education pathways. An emerging feature of contemporary Indigenous land and sea management is growing interest by Indigenous participants in leading and delivering research and management programs on country that combine traditional and scientific knowledges and approaches. Science, scientific tools and research partnerships are increasingly valued by Indigenous people as they seek greater ownership of decision making and planning on the lands and seas. A breakdown of the projects that were identified in each of the communities is summarised below. A more comprehensive report has been included as Appendix 13. This can be found at https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/resources/nailsma-report/.

6.1 Maningrida and Yirrkala

Community participants clearly articulated they wanted to see support for recognition of the traditional and cultural knowledge their old people hold in Western society. The lack of recognition for Indigenous knowledge in any formal western education and training does not acknowledge the skills and knowledge that Indigenous people bring with them through their own cultural methods of training and education. In the context of land and sea management, the training usually available to land and sea managers or people interested in land and sea management is the suite of nationally accredited Conservation and Land Management certificates. These certificates provide valuable on-ground practical skills and knowledge to learners, but do not recognise Indigenous methods of teaching and learning, or account for the role of Indigenous knowledge and culture in caring for country. As a result, it was identified that a new course should be made available that recognises Indigenous knowledge and culture and provides a start to recognising the knowledge embedded in Indigenous culture and the senior people who hold this knowledge.

Preliminary investigations of nationally accredited Vet courses available in Australia revealed courses that specifically recognise Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge. The Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management (ILM) is one of the courses identified and has six units that specifically recognise Indigenous Knowledges in a nationally accredited western framework, however it was not on scope in the NT at the
beginning of the WCE initiative. It was decided that the Certificate III in ILM be trialed in both Maningrida and Yirrkala, as a pilot project, to determine if it would be a suitable course to have available in the NT.

The Certificate III in ILM is now on scope in the NT with BIITE, as a result of the pilot project. Throughout the pilot project, community members including TOs and Elders, identified the content, delivery and assessment methods of each of the Traditional Knowledge units. In Maningrida we focused on the involvement of community Elders including TOs living in Maningrida and on outstations or homelands to senior Indigenous school staff and senior Rangers. In Yirrkala, the pilot project focused on providing training to the Yirrkala Rangers, which included the participation of young rangers, senior rangers and cultural advisors. The workshops also included the participation of TOs from each location the workshops were held.

The pilot was seen as successful for all participants from both Maningrida and Yirrkala. There are now further plans for NAILSMA to continue to work with BIITE to deliver ILM training. A pilot project has been identified to deliver the ILM VETiS students with assistance from community members who were involved in the original pilot. They will co-deliver the traditional knowledge units with an accredited trainer.

Project success include:
- Certificate III in ILM is now on scope in the NT with BIITE
- A VETiS ILM project is being developed for delivery in 2017 to five schools in the NT. The pilot aims to integrate Certificate III in ILM with the NT Curriculum Framework and/or the NTCET where possible for the benefit of VETiS students, including Learning on Country Programs.
- A ILM framework has been developed outlining the process followed and the training methodologies adopted during the pilot.

### 6.2 Tennant Creek/Elliott

At the beginning of the project, discussions with community members and organisation representatives identified a number of areas that could be supported in the region to give young people and adults the chance to further their education and link in with existing and prospective employment and business opportunities. Some of these areas requiring support included:
- Training and education needs for local Indigenous owned businesses, such as fencing contract services and contract mustering
- Heritage site conservation and management
- Environmental and cultural management of tourism sites such as Lake Woods
- Environmental services for railway and roadside maintenance, including shoulder slashing

Through consultation with project partners, community members, and Indigenous businesses, NAILSMA was directed to focus on supporting the development of training and education pathways in Elliott. NAILSMA then worked with Elliott community members and TOs to identify a project focus developing a Whole of Country plan for Ijibarda (Longreach Waterhole). Identifying training and education opportunities is embedded in supporting community aspirations for looking after country. Ijibarda is a significant conservation area of unmanaged high public use that is of serious concern to the (non-exclusive) Native Title holders/Traditional Owners. The main aims of the project included:
• Developing a Whole of Country Plan with Ijibarda TOs
• Supporting training pathways for an Indigenous land management business in Elliott, Triple P Contracting Pty Ltd.
• Working with Tennant Creek High School to support pathways in land management for Indigenous high school students

Project success included:
• The development of the Whole of Country Plan for Ijibarda. The plan provides an outline of the TO’s vision for their country, their goals, and the strategies for achieving these goals. The Ijibarda plan takes on a holistic approach to planning, and situates formal education and training as part of, and as a strategy for, achieving the broader goals of TOs to care for country and create positive changes in their communities.
• Due to the emphasis on the importance of education and training throughout the whole project TOs have recognised how different skill sets (e.g. business, CLM, mechanics, etc) are each important for caring for country and running a ranger group.
• This plan provides a framework for developing other whole of country plans for other Indigenous land and sea managers and TOs.

6.3 Yuendumu

A range of projects were identified in the Yuendumu Project Management Plan as potential projects. After a number of meetings, NAILSMA was directed by senior community members to focus on supporting the development of resources about Warlpiri birds. This builds on previous work done by the Bilingual Resource Development Unit (BRDU) at Yuendumu School, and supports the development of resources that can be used by Yuendumu School, rangers, community members, and by other schools with Warlpiri-speaking students.

The project sought to develop resources that can be used, and built upon, to support bilingual education about Warlpiri birds in schools and communities, and to highlight career pathways related to wildlife and bilingual/bicultural knowledges and skills. The project involved:
• Working with rangers, the BRDU, school students, families and senior community members to visit Newhaven Bird Sanctuary to observe birds and share and record stories about birds.
• Creating a range of resources about Warlpiri birds that can be used in classrooms and by the wider community. This include the Jurlpu Wardikinpirri-wana – Warlpiri Bird Dictionary; Posters about Warlpiri birds and the habitats; and a Warlpiri birds i-tracker application.

Project successes included:
• The development of the Jurlpu Warikinpirri-wana Warlpiri Bird Dictionary. A bird reference book developed by the Yuendumu School BRDU in collaboration with NAILSMA, including 34 bird species that had not previously been identified in the existing dictionary, with information and stories in both Warlpiri and English.
• The development of i-Tracker Warlpiri Bird Application that provides an interactive tool that supports literacy skills development and learning in both English and Warlpiri, supports learners to engage with knowledge about birds digitally, and also allows learners to record extra information or stories about the birds in their communities and homelands.
• The development of bird habitat posters to accompany the bird book and i-Tracker application.
6.4 Galiwin’ku

Galiwin’ku commenced an inter-tidal monitoring project that involved Sherpherdson College and Gawa Christian School students, rangers, community members and scientists. The aim of the project was to help students identify and understand marine life associated within tidal movements. The education pathways this projects promoted required students to engage with the teaching and learning cycle. Rich Focus Units form essential Learnings component of the NT Curriculum Framework and the Learning on Country (LOC) framework. A series of workshops were held to survey the reef in Galiwin’ku on the low tide of the full moon. Teachers and scientists worked together to develop a monitoring survey methodology that could be used by students to identify what marine life was found in the different zones, including intertidal muds, mangrove intertidal zone, shallow water intertidal and deep water to list a few. Once the ‘zone’ was determined, the students, teachers, community Elders and scientists would then record what marine life was found in each zone. A number of surveys were conducted between April and June 2015 and 2016.

The project focused on improving mainstream literacy and numeracy, school attendance and improving bilingual outcomes for school based participants by providing interesting and culturally relevant engagement with teaching and learning activities. The project resulted in the *Maypal Mayali Ga Wanu: Shellfish, Meaning and Place* reference book being developed.

This reference book records Yolŋu knowledge about shellfish in a bilingual alphabetical order with Yolŋu Matha, English and Latin (Linnaean) names for the shellfish. There is a list of supplementary Yolŋu Matha names in a number of Dhuwa and Yirritja languages. The beautifully illustrated colour book records Yolŋu knowledge about the shellfish and the environment. It includes detailed maps showing the location of shellfish and Yolŋu knowledge of the environment. The book records Yolŋu and western scientific knowledge on over 100 shellfish. Yolŋu Elders and community members contributed their extensive knowledge to the development of this resource and were involved in reviewing and editing the final book.

Project success included:

- The development of a multilingual reference book *Maypal, Mayali Ga Wanu: Shellfish, Meaning and Place* providing a broad volume of Yolŋu knowledge about shellfish with Yolŋu names in a number of Dhuwa and Yirritja languages, English and Latin. This book, which will be used throughout Arnhem Land, it a good example of how multilingual education resources can be developed.
- Supporting on-country workshops involving school students, teachers, scientists, linguists, TOs, senior Elders and community members to share knowledge and learn about shellfish.

6.5 Gunbalanya

NAILSMA focused on working with the Adjumarrarl Rangers and Gunbalanya School during this project. Adjumarrarl Rangers have been operating for 30 years and cover an area of approximately 10,000s qkm. It is highly desirable for the rangers to be supported and have the opportunity to articulate their training and further education interests, both as employed rangers as well as from a personal perspective. Planning meetings were held with the rangers to determine their work schedule for the year and therefore the training and skills they required to do their work. I-Tracker training was identified as important for developing the ranger’s skills in digital data management, monitoring and evaluation of their work activities and computer and mapping training.

A number of workshops were held with the Adjumarrarl Rangers to set them up to use i-tracker to record digital data about the work that they do. I-tracker was delivered in three steps:
• I-Tracker set-up: training included computer office set-up, understanding what was in the application, how to use the hardware, and how to collect information and recording sightings

• I-Tracker training in the field: using i-tracker on the job to collect information on the work that they are doing. Modifications were made on the i-tracker application to make it more suitable to the rangers needs, including local weed species added to ‘quick list’ with ID photos

• I-Tracker computer training: Computer based i-tracker training was delivered to the rangers showing them how to transfer data from mobile devices onto the computer, analyse data on the computer and produce maps and field reports.

NAILSMA also delivered i-tracker trainign to Gunbalanya VETiS students interested in a career as a ranger or butcher at the local meatworks. Working closely with the VETiS trainer, a training plan was identified to suit the students interested in both employment options.

Project successes included:

• Development and delivery of an i-tracker training plan to support rangers to develop their skills in monitoring, data collection, reporting and computer skills as part of their jobs as rangers and butchers.

• Working with Gunbalanya School and VETiS students to deliver i-tracker training and provide students with some of the skills required to be rangers.

• Developing training portfolios for rangers to identify the skills to equip them as rangers, provide a greater understanding about the level of training they are up to and assist them to articulate their personal training aspirations.
7.0 Territory –wide WCE activities, outputs and outcomes

In addition to campus-based staff visiting communities, the second half of the initiative also involved community-based staff visiting CDU and/or BIITE campuses in Darwin (including Batchelor) and Alice Springs. This has been an essential element in raising awareness of the various institutional services available; and for learning about higher education pathways.

Four whole-of-team face-to-face meetings were held during this course of the WCE initiative. These included both campus-based (outreach) and community-based staff. A commitment to learning ‘both-ways’ was a key aspect of these meetings. A meeting was held in Darwin in December 2015; Tennant Creek in April 2016; Maningrida in August 2016; and in Darwin in November 2016 (to coincide with the Indigenous Leaders Conference). These meetings provided an opportunity to consolidate planning and implementation processes; discuss research and evaluation approaches; and to share key learnings in a collegial way.

Mid-way through the WCE initiative, once relationships with communities had been established, Community Action Plans were developed collaboratively in all regions and communities outlining key activities to be achieved for the remainder of the initiative. These were discussed in detail at the joint team meeting held in Tennant Creek in April 2016 and Maningrida in August 2016. The Community Action Plans differed markedly between communities. In some instances, key actions were incorporated in SLAs with local Aboriginal community controlled organisations.

The WCE team facilitated a week-long event for community-based staff to visit CDU Casuarina campus in February 2016. The aim of this visit was to provide community-based staff with information about student support services, study options and requirements, and educational institutions. This increased knowledge and general awareness about the services that the university provides; an opportunity for remote staff to familiarise themselves with the campus; and an opportunity to meet and develop relationships with key management and staff within the university. The trip involved engagement with:

- The Office of Indigenous Student Services
- Academic Language and Learning Success Program
- Student Administration and Equity Services
- Department of Education – what is the NT Certificate of Education? What is an ATAR score?
- BIITE
- School of Indigenous Knowledges and Public Policy
- Menzies School of Health Research
- International House Darwin

Outcomes from this trip were evaluated. The intent was for key learnings to have a ripple effect within each of the home communities of community-based staff.

A Strategic Priority Projects Manager was employed in late 2015. This position had oversight of three strategic priority projects in the context of remote Indigenous higher education. These relate to (1) enhancing language, literacy and numeracy strategies for Indigenous people in remote communities; (2) whole-of-university approaches to remote Indigenous higher education; and (3) VET to HE pathways for remote Indigenous learners. Project plans were approved by the WCE Steering Group, and consultative processes to support implementation undertaken. Priority was given to the first project relating to LLN as this was identified as a consistent priority across all six communities.
There were a number of discussions, region specific and across the entire WCE team, to further refine the ‘community disposition towards tertiary education’ key performance indicator (KPI). The WCE team came to an agreement that the term ‘disposition’ was not meaningful to community based staff, and the term ‘interest’ is preferred. Additionally, the term ‘tertiary education’ is too narrow to account for remote community aspirations for education, given the significance of the VET sector in remote locations, and cultural forms of education that are not necessarily captured within the term ‘tertiary education’. Thus, the KPI that has been reported against, in general terms, is ‘community interest in further education’.

The Evaluation Coordinator developed a number of key documents to support the evaluation process within the WCE Initiative, including a set of Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines (Appendix 9), WCE Initiative Internal Data Storage Guidelines and a WCE Initiative Research and Evaluation Framework (Appendix 11). These documents have been developed through much consultation with the WCE team, including one-on-one discussions, regional team meetings, and WCE team workshopping of key concepts. These documents are available at https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/resources/.

The Evaluation Coordinator has also supported the evaluation process at the regional level. This included assistance with ways to embed evaluative thinking throughout community action plans (CAPs), planning of evaluation of specific events, and analysis of evaluative findings of specific elements within CAPs. A process was also set up for each regional team to discuss ongoing evaluation findings with the Evaluation Coordinator and Program Manager, to ensure that relevant information could be utilised in the appropriate way, as agreed with staff working in communities. For example, issues regarding community specific barriers to accessing further education were addressed wherever possible, and relevant information was also fed into the development of strategic priority projects.

‘Both ways’ thinking is a process that community based WCE staff report to be fundamental throughout engagement, and this has been strongly supported through the WCE initiative. A number of concepts and processes have been considered through cultural and mainstream ways of thinking, such as ‘whole of community engagement’; ‘planning’; ‘evaluation’; and ‘research’. These have been considered in in-depth discussions between regional teams, and WCE team meetings and workshops. These are included in the WCE Initiative Research and Evaluation Framework.

Social Network Analysis (SNA) was used at various intervals throughout the WCE initiative to map the nature of community engagement across five of the six sites. Each iteration has been presented as a report (with three in total) and WCE staff were encouraged to use this information as a means to guide community level conversations about partnerships to support community aspiration for higher education. A separate SNA process was adopted in Yuendumu, which explores voluntary board participation in that community. Refer to Appendix 12.

7.1 Remote Indigenous Researcher Forum

A Remote Indigenous Researcher Forum (RIRF) was jointly planned between the WCE team at CDU and BIITE. Indigenous researchers involved in the WCE initiative were invited to participate in RIRF, which was held from 11 to 14 August 2015 and involved sessions at both the CDU Casuarina campus and at the main BIITE campus located 100km south of Darwin at the township of Batchelor. A total of 27 Indigenous researchers attended representing a diverse range of remote regions and communities including WCE communities, Alice Springs and the Torres Strait Islands. Delegates from these communities were joined by WCE support staff and there were four main topics of discussion – Governance; Passing the Message; Our Story; and Building Research Communities. Key questions that emerged from each theme were discussed resulting in a final presentation of Indigenous Research principles and guidelines for remote

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4 Refer the Definitions at front of this report
A joint remote Indigenous school council gathering was held in Yirrkala from 4-6th May 2016. This was facilitated as a partnership between the WCE team and the Yambirrpapa Schools Council. Strengthening education governance and leadership in remote and very remote schools is a key foundation for improving Indigenous education journeys for children and youth in the Northern Territory (NT). The planning and delivery of a joint school council gathering provided a safe environment for school council representatives to share stories and acknowledge the challenges and successes of school councils across the NT. The joint school council gathering included representatives from Yambirrpapa Schools Council, Shepherdson College School Council, Maningrida College Council, Gunbalanya School Council, Yuendumu School Council, Tennant Creek High School Council and Tennant Creek Primary School Council. CDU and the Northern Territory Department of Education also nominated representatives to attend. This gathering included 20 Indigenous representatives, including the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at CDU. 17 were representatives from seven remote school councils. A key output from the gathering was the identification of key focus areas that need further investment and support. These are outlined in a collective school council statement on remote Indigenous education developed during the gathering. For further information please visit:


7.3 Remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit

The WCE team from CDU in partnership with BIITE delivered a Remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit on the 8-9th November 2016. This was an invitation-only event, that provided a valuable opportunity for 30+ emerging youth leaders from seven remote and regional communities from the Northern Territory and Western Australia to network and share ideas on youth leadership and engagement, and to discuss local community-based activities and achievements. While youth leadership was the focus of the summit it has also provided an opportunity to explore broader themes including education and employment pathways, connecting with communities and language, as well as culture and identity. The program included the opportunity to speak with Mr Charlie King – ‘No More’ Campaign, Honorable Ngaree AhKit Assistant Minister for Seniors and Youth; and Ms Wendy Ludwig, Acting Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership. Many Summit participants also participated in an Indigenous Leaders Conference at Charles Darwin University over the following two days. More information can be found at:


This includes a video of Indigenous youth aired on ABC News
7.4 Indigenous Leaders Conference

The WCE team was involved in the co-planning and co-delivery of the 2016 Indigenous Leaders Conference facilitated by the School of Education at CDU in partnership with BIITE and the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory. More than 280 people gathered in Darwin on the 10th and 11th of November to explore and debate the conference theme ‘engagement and the power of choice’. There were multiple presentations, workshops and panel discussions facilitated by the WCE team, including many involving remote community-based staff. This demonstrated WCE’s strong commitment to collective action and partnership development. The conference provided a timely opportunity for the WCE team to report on key findings, actions and outcomes from its work over the last two and a half years. This included presentations about community engagement, mentoring, metaphor use, educational leadership and governance, adult LLN, and remote education research processes and achievements. Importantly, WCE also supported more than 30 youth from the six partner communities to attend and learn from the conference, as strong and aspiring education leaders and advocates in their respective communities. The conference also provided an opportunity for intergenerational learning. Further information about the conference can be found at:


The WCE website has multiple examples and case studies of work undertaken through the WCE initiative. For further information please go to https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/

7.5 Indigenous Adult English language, literacy and numeracy Workshop

The WCE’s Strategic Priority Project (SPP) on Indigenous adult English Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) has focused on increasing action and knowledge-sharing to support positive change for Indigenous adults living in the NT. The project arose from listening to people express clear determination and aspiration for themselves, their families and their communities in each of the partner communities, (and subsequently from events such as the November workshop and from interview and focus groups). English language, literacy and numeracy features strongly in debates and policies around school and early childhood education. Adult LLN is not afforded the same attention, even though it is an essential ingredient for social betterment, lifelong learning, progression in employment and getting ahead in further education. Although there are some gains, and examples of successful projects in the NT, efforts tend to be stop-start and there is little improvement in levels of English literacy rates.

The third Indigenous Leaders Conference was held at CDU on the 10-11 November 2016. A full-day pre-conference workshop called Indigenous adult English language, literacy and numeracy: A time for action was organised by the LLN consultative group. (Additional information in Section 7.1). A further Symposium is planned for 12 September 2017 as part of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy (ACAL). The SPP Manager is jointly organising this event which will be reported on subsequent to this report.
7.1 The Strategic Priority Projects (SPPs)

7.1.1 Activity at commencement

In consultation with the Australian Government through an agreed contract variation, a number of Strategic Priority Projects (SPPs) were initiated from CDU. A SPP Manager, based in Darwin, was employed in November 2015 to lead the projects. These projects were a response to themes which had been identified across the six WCE communities through interview, team discussions and stakeholder input. Three SPPs were selected from an initial list of 11 projects. These areas were:

1. Indigenous adult English LLN policy and programs in CDU and the NT
2. Strengthening the educational pathway between VET and higher education for Indigenous students
3. A whole of university approach to improving outcomes for Indigenous students from the NT

Generally each of these projects aimed to influence positive systems change and service improvement through:

• Using WCE Indigenous community research outcomes, and Indigenous input to catalyse and/or inform strategic action within CDU and more broadly;
• Growing and/or consolidating the available research around each project theme. For example, through literature searches, interviews, group consultations, consolidation of statistics, preparation of reports and articles, and organisation of workshops and symposiums;
• Increasing awareness and garnering stakeholder support through discussion and information sharing; applied research; consultation and collective action and working group formation; and
• Writing of funding applications to promote continuity of the strategic priority.

A range of activity was undertaken in each SPP including: interviews, research, literature reviews, preparation of grant applications, and feeding information into the preparation of academic papers/journal articles. During the second half of 2016, however, it was decided to limit activity to one strategic area. This decision acknowledged the:

• need for long-term action in each of the three SPP areas, but action in LLN may have broader outcomes
• degree of complexity within each SPP
• real constraints of time and capacity in this short-term project
• scale of the work required in each area; and
• number of stakeholders involved

The primary focus of activity became Indigenous adult English LLN, a concern which had emerged as a significant constraint to access, progression and attainment not only in higher education but along the educational pathway and in work5 and life. The decision to pursue the English LLN project more deeply was informed by a strongly committed expert consultative group who recognised:

• the extent of the need for improvement in LLN services, the scale of the problem and the lack of appropriate policy, programs, coordinated and resources;

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5 It is to be noted that most Indigenous students from the NT who enter higher education are mature age and functioning within a workplace (CDU. 2017).
• the potential for making a real contribution in the short-term through consultation and collective action; and
• identification of considerable stakeholder Indigenous and multi-sectoral support.

Improvement in English LLN can have powerful, proven and positive effects on individuals, families and communities, society and the economy. This focus on LLN continued throughout 2016 and a funding variation has enabled implementation until August 2017. The purpose of this project was to lay the foundations for sustained improvement in Indigenous adult English LLN policy and programs in the NT.

Significant research and consultation for this project occurred with a broad range of stakeholders including subject specialists, high level CDU staff, Senior Indigenous leaders, Australian and NT Government staff, NGO staff and WCE Steering Group. The type and extent of input depended on the activities which were underway at the time. From January to July 2017 the primary focus of this Strategic Priority Project (SPP) was internal, that is, within Charles Darwin University (CDU) itself – undertaking interviews, considering what was available for Indigenous adults wishing to improve their English LLN through the University, how the ‘system’ worked.

**A workshop held in July 2016**, attended by 33 University staff, provided an opportunity to discuss English LLN provision within the University, to network and explore current LLN-related English LLN enablers and barriers. An internal report summarising the outcomes and proceedings was distributed to management. The report, written for strategic use identified for example challenges and opportunities related to systems, staffing, structure, qualifications and access issues for Indigenous adults. The SPP engendered broad based support within CDU.

**An LLN consultative group** composed of specialist LLN practitioners and University staff/management informed the action and strategy of the SPP throughout its operation. The group has been strongly supported by Indigenous Elders from some of the WCE communities. These elders attended workshops and meetings, provided video footage and have made themselves available to guide the project and the SPP manager – adding their perspectives and strength. The work of this group was supplemented by working groups on an “as needed” basis. For example: the Indigenous adult English LLN Action Statement and the statistical overview of LLN in the NT. This consultative group ensured the inclusion of specialist knowledge, NT experience and academic understanding.

The group added value to the SPP: increased potential for strategic internal information sharing within the University; fed into organisational learning and sustainable systems/service improvement; and provided information on findings for use in strategic and operational plans within the University (should this be required).

**Outcomes:** The SPPS have contributed to research, to journal articles, conference and seminar presentations, a conference panel discussion, a strategic research framework developed by the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE), and strategic planning consultations within CDU. Literature reviews and archiving of research material for each strategic priority project are near completion and will be available for future use of this LLN Network and abroad. A range of case studies have been prepared and more are in preparation (at time of writing). Video footage of interviews on LLN have also been edited and supported conference and workshop presentations.

The value of creation of an unaffiliated role within a HEPPP program has been affirmed by stakeholders, workshop evaluations and the consultative group. This role has enabled effort within the educational system focused on areas of primary concern to Indigenous people from remote areas. The SPP Manager has been able to allocate resources and time to strategically catalyse action for systems change, engaging
with sectoral good will, knowledge and expertise to suggest the way forward to support long term change. The limiting factor has been the shortness of timeframe (1 yr)

7.1.2 SPP Principles

A set of SPP Principles were developed by the Consultative Group and approved by the Steering Group to guide action and approach, these were:

- **Consultation and group processes**: High levels of stakeholder input, forming consultative groups, input from WCE community based staff and Critical friends, building of trust and a learning environment
- **Enhancing sustainability**: To increase the possibility of sustainable, systemic outcomes SPP will identify and engage with existing linked initiatives and innovations; promote information-sharing and facilitate solutions; collate associated evidence base; engage with senior management.
- **Strengths based**: Strengths based approaches will include building of trusting strategic relationships; focus on successes; promote high levels of cooperation’ catalyse problem solving
- **Community evidence base and case studies**: Projects will draw on WCE research findings (including case studies) and amplify the remote Indigenous voice to support improved service delivery within CDU
- **Openness to learning and knowledge sharing**: The SPP will cultivate openness to learning and knowledge sharing, the need for establishing safe reflective practice, and structures for encouraging systems thinking
- **Gather up information from broad sources**: The SPP will facilitate collection, communication and dissemination of diverse evidence to support positive change

*Promote systems thinking*: The SPP will aim to analyse and enhance the ‘enabling environment’ for improved VET to higher education pathways

*Resource sharing and partnerships*: The SPP promote sharing of innovation, draw on case studies of successful initiatives of WCE partner agencies and implement pilot projects where possible

7.1.3 Shift in focus: Indigenous adult English LLN in the NT

The direction of the SPP started to shift after the July workshop from initial CDU focus to an NT–wide collective focus. This was a response to: a) low levels of Indigenous participation in higher education and VET and indications that progression along the educational pathway was limited by low levels of English LLN and that very little assistance is available beyond VET learner support for people with pre-level, level 1 and level II ACSF b) Identification of the widespread need for coordinated action around adult English LLN; c) identified deficits in adult education policy and programs in the NT; d) the extent of individual need identified through interview, community conversations and desktop research; and e) stakeholder willingness to participate in collective processes to improve the situation.

The SPP on LLN has identified an urgent need for advocacy and increased understanding of, equitable, community-led, research informed LLN policies, programs and delivery/evaluation models.

Low levels of LLN significantly affect progression beyond Certificate II in VET; entry into enabling programs for University; entry or progression in work and result in social and economic exclusion or reduced participation.
The SPP on English LLN aimed at building momentum for system-wide strategic change in the NT through increased engagement around LLN within university, government, non-government, business, industry and RTO sectors. More broadly the aims have been to:

1. Catalysing coordinated action, define responsibility, and increase support for development and implementation of an NT adult LLN strategy (a multi-partisan, long-term, coordinated, evaluated, community-wide responses)

2. Increasing understanding of the social and economic impacts of low levels of English LLN and the flow on benefits of improvement for individuals, children and families, organisations and community

3. Implementing, documenting and evaluating innovative LLN delivery models (e.g. workplace capacity building, community-wide campaigns, state-wide and community learning centre)

4. Fostering and facilitating Indigenous-led responses and amplify the Indigenous voice in strategy and policy development

7.1.4 The November 2016 Workshop on Indigenous adult LLN in the NT (refer above)

In November 2016 eighty one individuals (36% Indigenous) from twenty-eight organisations and agencies attended a LLN workshop at Charles Darwin University (CDU) as part of the 2016 Indigenous Leaders conference. The workshop aimed to:

- Showcase best practice examples of English LLN models and explore underlying principles;
- Enable remote Indigenous leaders in education and governance to share views and ideas to inform and guide discussion;
- Explore the need for, and benefit of, an Adult English LLN Strategy for the NT, and
- Promote re-formation of an NT Adult LLN network (the NT Chapter of the Australian Council of Adult Literacy (ACAL)

7.1.5 The Action Statement on Indigenous adult English LLN

The approximately 80 attendees at this workshop agreed to be part of a network, which has subsequently increased to over 100 organisations and individuals. The basic elements of a consensus statement “The Action Statement on Indigenous Adult LLN in the NT” (refer to Appendix 14) were agreed and a working group completed the statement in April 2017. The Action Statement working group included: Yuendumu Learning Centre; Adult Literacy Services (consultant - National Training Award Winner) Industry Skills Advisory Council NT(ISAC); Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (Senior lecturer / Excellence in LLN Practice Award – Australian Training Awards 2016); BIITE Senior Advisor, Community Engagement); Indigenous Elder, Board member of multiple agencies Tenant Creek); Associate Professor OPVC-IL; BIITE Head of Research; Academic from CDU (interculturality doctorate); LLN delivery specialists and managers X 2; Manager of LINC Tasmania; Assistant Director Libraries, NTG; Indigenous elders employed by WCE X2. Broadly, the Action Statement calls for:

1. Collection of data on, implement and evaluate delivery models which appear to be successful and identify underlying elements of success (past and present);
2. Form, site and consolidate a NT-wide broadly composed stakeholder network;
3. Implement Indigenous-led and informed policy and programs which build and support local capacity to deliver within community rather than relying on external delivery models, and
4. Advocate for and work towards long-term strategic initiatives with designated resources founded on an Adult and Family LLN Strategy (policy or Framework) for the NT.
7.1.6 The Statistical Report on Indigenous adult LLN in the NT

The SPP identified that there is no comprehensive source of adult LLN data for the Indigenous population of NT. Other jurisdictions use results from the 2011/12 Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) survey to understand adult literacy and numeracy competency for their population. The PIAAC survey in the NT however did not sample in very remote Australia, and did not cover populations living in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This significantly impacts the utility of the data for the NT and disproportionately affects data for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. The implications of this deficit for policy development and socio-economic research are broad.

Between June- September 2017 the SPP has employed a statistician (former Director of the ABS Centre for ATSI Statistics) to jointly produce a report on English LLN in the NT. This incorporates analysis of Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) data from a range of LLN and foundation skills providers. The Simple English, pictorial report will be presented at the September 2017 workshop, and available for use within the University to support the Post Graduate Diploma on adult Language Literacy and Numeracy Skills Development and presentations to organisations, agencies and indigenous boards.

7.1.7 Summary of progress

- SPP Manager actively engaged in participatory and desktop research, stakeholder engagement and events organization and management.
- Literature searches were completed for each SPP
- Active CDU Consultative Group was consolidated and working groups formed
- Stakeholder ‘champions’ were identified and engaged in active partnership (including subject specialists, high level CDU staff, Senior Indigenous leaders, Government staff, NGO staff, critical friends in government and non-government, and WCE Steering Group)
- The SPP Manager has made contributions to: journal articles; presentations; LLN focused CDU and conference workshops, a conference panel discussion; Strategic research framework for the Centre for Equity in Higher Education; CDU strategic planning consultations; Action Statement on Indigenous LLN; formation of an informal NT Network (of potential).
- Campus-wide, Indigenous community, and inter-agency research interviews (including video interviews
- In addition to visits to WCE community sites, visits have been made to the: National Centre for Equity in Higher Education (NCEHE); the Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education (CEEHE); University of Newcastle; and Wollotuka Institute; Curtin University and University of Western Australia. Topics discussed included joint research potentials, grant applications, information sharing about HEPPP program design, implementation and outcomes. Visits to 26TEN head office at the Department of Education in Hobart and site visits to LINC and 26TEN in Glenorchy, Huonville and Geeveston Tasmania; Arnhem Land Progress Association and Thamarrurr Development Corporation
- Six SPP-related funding applications were submitted for funding through the HEPPP National Priority Projects, Aboriginal Benefits Account, and Office of Learning and Teaching to extend key aspects of SPP projects. None of these proposals were funded.
- Another one-day symposium is being arranged for the 12th September As part of the 2017 ACAL Conference, which will be held in Darwin.
### 7.1.8 Milestones

- **14 July 2016 CDU LLN workshop**: (refer above) Outcomes: included a report with recommendations such as the need for LLN Strategy for NT; Economic costing of the impact of low LLN levels in NT; a LLN network in the NT.
- In August 2016 **internal report on SPP LLN research findings and recommendation** was distributed. The report was aimed at informing CDU decision-making in relation to access for Indigenous adults with low ACSF levels.
- **In August 2016 the SPP Manager**: became part of the organizing committee for the Indigenous Leaders Conference
- **9 November 2016**: Workshop at the Indigenous Leaders Conference, CDU (above): Outcomes: (above) The November workshop funded through WCE by the Australian Government was attended by 81 participants from 28 government departments and non-government organisations.
- **10 November 2016**: a Panel Discussion in the main university Auditorium on the 10th as part of the national Indigenous Leaders Conference: *Engagement and the Power of Choice: Indigenous Adult LLN – Core or Peripheral.*
- **March 2017**: SPP Manager became part of organizing committee for the Australian Council for Adult Literacy in Darwin (Sept.)
- **June 2017**: Adult Learning Australia conference in Tasmania, site visits to LINC and 26TEN and interviews.
- **September 2017**: Release of the Statistical Overview of Adult LLN in the NT Report
- **Sept 2017**: one day Symposium on Indigenous adult LLN (ACAL) Conference

### 7.1.9 Continuation

A number of attempts to secure further funding to continue the Strategic Priority Projects have been made, but have been unsuccessful to date. A further submission will be made to the Prime Minister and Cabinet before closure of the project.

The project essentially will only work if collaborative integrity is maintained and the focus of the project, responds to a broad range of LLN needs and builds towards sustainable, evidence based, indigenous-led and Indigenous-informed policies and programs. This project is only one small, time-limited step nevertheless it can and will contribute to the building of a significant platform to inform positive change.
7.2 Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (REIL) partnership projects

7.2.1 Fire Management and Emergency Management Training Project

This project was led by the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods at CDU in partnership with the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Co-operative Research Centre. It also involved a partnership with ARPNet. The intent of the project was to work with Indigenous fire management researchers to tailor local fire management curriculum materials to the Northern Australian context. This was piloted in Maningrida and Gunbalanya.

The project resulted in the development of training materials including course unit descriptions, training delivery materials, assessment tasks and a training manual. The design process has put Indigenous knowledge at the centre of the learning – i.e. it is about caring for country within local cultural frameworks. Detailed evaluation processes were developed and conducted by ARPNet researchers’ (in relation to engaging participants and presenters about training delivery). Focus units included:

- TETBNH301 Non-Indigenous and Indigenous BNH Management Principles
- TETBNH302 Applying Indigenous Fire Management Processes in North Australian Contexts (Local Variant)
- TETBNH303 Community Engagement and Cultural Protocols (Local Variant)
- TETBNH304 Fire Management and the Law
- TETBNH305 Digital Mapping Tools Used in BNH Management
- TETBNH306 Apply Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- TETBNH307 Participate in Debrief (Local Variant)
- TETBNH308 Advanced Situational Awareness and Dynamic Risk Assessment (Local Variant)
- TETBNH309 Remote Tactical Leadership
- TETBNH310 Develop Operational Work Plans
- TETBNH311 Work Safely Around Aircraft

The training manual and course materials can be found at https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/resources/.

The following units were completed and trialed:

- TETBNH305 Digital Mapping Tools Used in BNH Management - GIS and digital mapping. Completed Unit materials include booklet, assessment and practical activities. Project team facilitated consultation with target communities. Digital technology activities were very engaging for Indigenous participants (and brought the landscape ‘to life’).
- TETBNH309 Remote Tactical Leadership. All senior fire and emergency management personnel are required to undertake training in some form of operational leadership – herein called ‘Tactical Leadership’ in line with the course provided by the SA Country Fire Service to Bushfires NT.
- TETBNH302 Applying Indigenous Fire Management Processes in North Australian Contexts (Local Variant)
7.2.2 Tactical Leadership

These existing leadership units are informed by a structured hierarchical leadership model reflecting origins in the armed forces and based upon western concepts of power, command and control. It is not the intent of this project to in any sense denigrate or undermine these systems. However, they have been less effective in optimizing human resources in remote situations largely because they have been less effective in facilitating cross-cultural operations. This is in large part due to the cultural settings in which they are established. In non-Indigenous society leadership can be determined through a range of means including election or appointment. Leaders are clearly designated and given rank (eg: “Level 3 Incident Controller”) and this is universally accepted by the participants in the activity or organization.

The Fire and Emergency Management Training Project component of the WCE initiative set out an objective to establish training that builds a bridge between the two leadership models. Two workshops were held (one in March and a second in July 2016) to explore how Aboriginal land management and leadership can be incorporated into a course that sets out culturally appropriate ‘tactical leadership’ principles and makes a connection with existing ‘western’ courses. The workshops focused on ILM situations where leadership is inherited and relates specifically to the totemic affiliations of one’s ancestors and to the designated tracts of country for which those affiliations apply. Consequently, the ‘appointment’ of an individual to a position of leadership in a non-Indigenous context can, and does, lead to failure in many instances. That is, participants in the organization or activity will only accept the authority of the leader within the correct totemic and locative affiliations. Outside those parameters decisions of the ‘leader’ have no weight and are likely to be ignored, even in circumstances where the leader has considerable personal authority and charisma. To counteract this tendency, this project involved the development of a leadership model that drew on Indigenous knowledge systems. In this model a complex series of interactions requires that individuals fulfil specific roles in attending the decision-making process. The Darlnyin is ‘the big boss’ but refers to the Djungkayi, ‘the manager’, the ‘Mingkirrinji’ and the wider family in taking a decision. If the decision has regard to fire then the ‘firemen’ – senior men with totemic affiliation and deep practical knowledge of fire – are critical players. Indeed the Darlnyin may also be a fireman. The Njirri is a similar to an auditor and ensures that proper protocols are observed throughout the process. Unlike western auditors however, the Njirri, with agreement of the many clans may also effect punishment for breaches of protocol. In addition to these ‘statutory’ considerations, decisions need to be made that reflect the universal dichotomy of people and land into Dhuwa and Yirritja. All people and all parts of the landscape are designated Dhuwa or Yirritja and no decision is made without an effort to affect a balance between the two. The Darlnyin is the ‘big boss’ for a clearly defined area of land and their authority will not be acknowledged beyond those bounds. As an individual the Darlnyin may become a ‘follower’, participating in an activity in a subordinate role on another clan’s country.

The workshop on tactical leadership attracted strong interest in the community with a number of participants making a special effort to attend. The discussion about emergency management, leadership and natural disasters lead to some vibrant conversation. When these senior men were asked about previous interaction between authorities or researchers and themselves through the direct question “has anyone ever talked to you about this before?” They answered immediately and loudly “No!”, “Never!””, “Nothing!”
7.2.3 Applying Indigenous Fire Management Processes in North Australian Contexts (Local Variant)

Having set out the wider context for the fire and natural hazard approaches applied in the north, a training unit was prepared that examines the mechanisms through which a broader fire management understanding is applied in a practical local setting. Standard elements of fire management (fuel loads etc) are included in this information, but the point-of-difference lies in the acquisition and documentation of traditional local practices applied at a district level.

A program of documentation of this local knowledge has been undertaken by engaging with ARPNet for each of three communities where the training was piloted. A senior ARPNet practitioner, Mr Otto Bulmaniya Campion, himself a fire manager, has been conducting interviews with senior firemen and Djungkayi for the communities of Gunbalanya, Maningrida and Ramingining. The program of interviews seeks to generate materials specific to the local district that reflect the rationale for the preferred fire regime in different habitats through each district, together with the timing of fire management operations required to achieve that fire regime.

Informants were asked to talk about the past fire regime and how it differs from that in place at present, and to consider what the future of fire management in the district should look like. This last element incorporates speculation of course, but includes thinking about the interactions of climate change and future economic opportunities through greenhouse emissions abatement and sequestration and other payment for environmental service industries. While these will necessarily be built on traditional indigenous fire knowledge (indeed the carbon farming initiative includes the first statutory reference to traditional Aboriginal fire management practice) they will incorporate variations required to guarantee emissions reductions in the future.

The information generated through the project was used to develop ‘local variant’ course materials.
8.0 Funding applications submitted by WCE

Throughout the latter part of 2016 a number of grants were prepared and submitted to extend some aspects of the WCE initiative. This included seven proposals for the 2016 HEPPP National Priorities Pool (NPP) funding round and six proposals for the 2016 Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA) funding round.

**Proposed NPP grant applications included:**

- Indigenous governance and leadership in remote schools: What impact does this have on remote Indigenous secondary student aspirations for further education?
- Strengths-based stories: Strengthening participation in higher education through examples of success from remote Indigenous communities
- Indigenous-led review and development of education policies: Framework for implementation (led by NAILSMA)
- Out of school – Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) policy, programs and best practice for remote Indigenous Australians
- Unlocking the higher education capacity in East Arnhem Land’s multilingual/intercultural heritage
- Recognition of Indigenous peoples prior traditional and cultural knowledges (led by NAILSMA)
- Developing a model: Whole of University approach to remote/regional Indigenous higher education
- **Enabling Aboriginal higher education access and participation from remote and regional Northern Territory** (led by BIITE)

**Proposed ABA grant applications included:**

- Remote Indigenous Success in Education (RISE) Together (proposed extension of WCE over 3 ½ years)
- A collaborative network for Indigenous adult English language literacy and numeracy (LLN) in the NT
- Indigenous adult LLN in the NT: engagement, feasibility and innovation
- A cultural and intercultural awareness program for Galiwin’ku
- Building remote Indigenous research and evaluation capacity through Research ‘Us’
- Strengthening Indigenous school leadership and governance in the NT

Only one of these grant applications was successful. This was an application prepared by NAILSMA and submitted through CDU entitled ‘Indigenous-led review and development of education policies: Framework for implementation’. A reduced budget was negotiated by the Australian Government significantly reducing the scope of the project.

**Proposed ABA Grant application August 2017:**

- A cultural and intercultural training program for Galiwin’ku, Elcho Island

**Proposed NCSEHE grant application 2017:**

- Aboriginal perspectives on interculturality in a remote community school
9.0 Opportunities to influence university systems change

The WCE initiative has uncovered a series of systemic, institutional barriers and opportunities for policy development and reform. These relate to a combination of factors, including multi-site initiatives, remote and very remote initiatives, and Indigenous specific initiatives. This required a significant amount of administration and management time to ensure the WCE initiative operated smoothly, and responded to complex cultural, social and political contexts.

Where possible, and where there was a receptiveness to change, the WCE team provided direct input and advice into ways that CDU policy, procedure, forms, guidelines, strategies, contracts, agreements could be strengthened or adapted to better support remote Indigenous access and participation in higher education.

The table below provides an overview of activity areas and some examples:

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<tr>
<th>Area identified as requiring adaptation /improvement/change</th>
<th>Example/s:</th>
<th>Issue and Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Human Resources:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.1 Recruitment</strong></td>
<td>Expectations associated with the constituents of recruitment panels for academic staff</td>
<td>WCE justified a case to appoint a fixed-term part-time position at an Academic Level C level based on a community-driven recruitment process</td>
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<td>WCE created a classification matrix for Indigenous employment at CDU to acknowledge and reward the contribution that Indigenous knowledges and language can make to various work roles.</td>
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<td><strong>1.2 Complaints and Performance Management</strong></td>
<td>Complaints and performance management procedures (and industrial procedures) are Western in orientation</td>
<td>Indigenous staff were supported to have interpreters during complaints and performance management discussions</td>
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<td>Emphasis was placed on remote Indigenous community standpoints to resolve industrial issues at the community level (i.e. respecting Elder feedback about community visitations of non-Indigenous staff)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.3 Enterprise Agreement</strong></td>
<td>Implementation of the Language Allowance provisions</td>
<td>It is difficult to pay casual staff (such as most remote Indigenous community-based staff) a language allowance based on the current EBA language requirements to (a) be explicitly outlined in position profiles; and (b) to calculate the language allowance which is currently tied to expectations of a full-time load</td>
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### 1.4 PAYG

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<th>Electronic version only available</th>
<th>Electronic version only available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAYG statements for casual staff were hard to access, as the current CDU system only provides digital copies. This was problematic for staff who could not access a printer or could not access their online staff profile to download or view their PAYG. This document is particularly important for tax purposes and reporting to Centrelink, particularly in relation to implications for social welfare entitlements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Procurement –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Credit Cards</th>
<th>Corporate Credit Cards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All campus-based staff were issued corporate credit cards to support work-related expenses whilst traveling remotely. Extended trips resulted in multiple transactions increasing the administration and finance reporting burden. In some instances the remote and very remote nature of WCE work meant that (a) some remote services were unable to provide ATO compliant tax receipts; or (b) did not have credit card facilities. This further increased the finance reporting burden.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. Information Communication and Technology (ICT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training:</th>
<th>Training:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Training:</td>
<td>a) The remote location of Indigenous community-based staff made it difficult to train staff in the use of ICT. This was exacerbated by generally poor levels of digital literacy. Time and effort was invested in rectifying this through the WCE initiative (an extensive ICT Equipment Instruction was developed and created, as well as one-on-one training with our community based staff).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Out of hours supports:</td>
<td>b) CDU has no out of hours support for ICT work. This is contrary to the way many remote Indigenous communities work, where work often extends beyond normal nosiness hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Equipment:</td>
<td>c) There are unique considerations to securely store and care for ICT equipment in remote environments. This was an important consideration when procuring ICT equipment for remote community-based staff. For example, tough phones and cases; and hard-covered laptop and iPad cases were required. In addition, the weight of ICT equipment (laptops and iPads) is a significant consideration for campus-based staff travelling remote communities. Most regional airlines have a 13Kg luggage limit, which can be problematic for staff visiting communities from one to two weeks at a time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Phone and internet data plans:</td>
<td>d) The University has existing ICT contracts which limit flexibility in the types of data plans that can be accessed. WCE was locked into Telstra as a sole provider in the remote communities we were working in. Phone costs were high, yet they were an important communication tool in the context of remote work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Phone and internet services:</td>
<td>e) There was a high level of variability in reliable access to internet services in remote locations. This made it difficult for staff to engage in work from time to time (e.g. ability to access share drives remotely, or to communicate effectively via email).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Payroll

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Casual Pays:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b) Travel Allowance:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Sitting fees:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a) Casual pay sheets need to be signed by the employee. This is not always possible for remote staff who may have limited access to adequate resources to send through pay sheets from a remote location. The online casual payment system assisted this, whereby paysheets were signed retrospectively when campus-based staff were visiting communities.

- b) Travel Allowance is only paid by CDU on a Thursday. This is problematic for staff (particularly casual staff) that are required to travel before their scheduled pay date, often leaving staff out of pocket for short periods. This is particularly relevant when travel plans change at late notice (which occurred frequently for a range of reasons, throughout WCE).

- c) It is common practice in remote Indigenous community contexts to pay Elders and community members sitting fees for their time and contribution. These payments are only paid on Thursdays and do not accommodate the need to pay people for their time at a particular point in time. This creates a high level of ‘humbug’ for administrative staff and impacts on the level of trust and respect afforded when working with remote communities.

5. Travel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Corporate travel:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b) Cab charges:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Accommodation:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a) Policy and procedures relating to travel do not always fit well for remote travel. For example, the current corporate travel provider does not book accommodation in some remote locations, yet the same fees are charged if only a flight is booked. Similarly, fees are charged changes to travel bookings, CDU policy requires bookings to be made 21 days in advance, whereas the on-ground reality of remote Indigenous engagement means a more responsive system is required that can accommodate changes for sorry business, ceremonies, and incremental weather (preferably without fees being incurred). Charter flights incur an unnecessarily high booking fee from the corporate travel provider, when required. These issues all create increases in the administrative burden for travel arrangements. WCE had input into the parameters of the tender documentation for the recent corporate travel provider tender, and has been able to negotiate project specific exemptions. Significant input was also provided in the recent review of CDU travel and risk assessment policies.
b) Sometimes it can be difficult to provide cab-charge vouchers to remote staff in advance of travel for a variety of reasons. In addition, there is potential for misuse of cabcharge vouchers. A cabcharge use policy has been introduced by OPVCIL throughout the WCE initiative.

c) Access to affordable accommodation has been problematic in both remote and urban locations throughout the WCE initiative. In addition, CDU policy does not allow for charge back facilities for food purchases in hotels/motels (a preferred alternative to delayed TA payments) for remote Indigenous staff. WCE negotiated an exemption for its staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Finance</th>
<th>a) Reporting:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Coding:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Receipting:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- CDU finance reporting does not provide an accurate point-in-time indication of income and expenditure, which makes it difficult to monitor finances efficiently. For example, year-on-year carry-over amounts are not reflected in calendar year reporting, making it difficult to ascertain under or over expenditure. Importantly, these do not reflect the budget lines associated with the Conditions of Grant. More nuanced reporting was negotiated throughout the WCE initiative.

- Every item of expenditure needed to be manually coded against budget lines within the Conditions of Grant. This was administratively burdensome given the sheer volume of expenditure, particularly in relation to Pcard expenditure for each individual staff member.

| 7. Recognition of Prior Learning | WCE identified that many Indigenous learners (particularly adult learners) had seldom been advised of opportunities for Recognition of Prior Learning. There were examples of people enrolled in a Bachelor courses that had worked in their industry for over 30 years without any assessment of RPL.
|                               | There is currently very little formal recognition of Indigenous knowledges in RPL processes at CDU. Initial conversations have commenced to raise this as a systemic issue, but further investment is required to achieve culturally appropriate processes at scale. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. Intellectual Property</th>
<th>a) Indigenous knowledges:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- The concept of Intellectual Property, particularly in relation to Indigenous knowledges and the creation of artwork, is important to many remote Indigenous communities. Contractual obligations within the Conditions of Grant provided by the Australian Government and institutional IP policies, seldom acknowledge this in a way that is consistent with national Indigenous protocols in this space. Where possible, WCE contracts acknowledged the importance of IP in the context of Indigenous livelihoods.
9. Research Integrity
   a) Authorship:
   CDU’s authorship policy has a very Western academic focus. It fails to acknowledge ethical considerations about authorship within Indigenous research contexts and how this might be negotiated in a culturally respectful way. WCE made a commitment to co-author presentations and publications arising from WCE. Approval processes were formalised through the Steering Group.

10. Ethics
   a) Participatory Action Research (PAR):
   b) Consent:
   a) Participatory Action Research and Developmental Evaluation approaches involve a significant amount of ambiguity and highly reliant on well articulated processes align with community viewpoints. The WCE team worked closely with the CDU Human Research Ethics Committee to negotiate variations and increase reporting to demonstrate good ethical practice and transparency. For example, notifying HREC of new investigators and project outcomes on a more frequent basis than is required.
   b) WCE staff developed a process for seeking informed consent in remote Indigenous communities. This includes seeking consent in local Indigenous languages. This is now used as an exemplar by CDU:


11. Graduation Ceremonies
   a) Remote locations:
   Remote communities often reported about difficulties in attending formal University Graduation Ceremonies. There was a strong preference for community based graduation ceremonies/celebrations with a view that community and family are critical to Indigenous student success. There are poorly developed institutional policies, procedures and protocols for CDU staff to participate in community-based graduation ceremonies/celebrations. WCE has developed a draft remote community celebration policy as a result of this feedback.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exemptions:</th>
<th>Indigenous knowledges/contexts:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Exemptions:</td>
<td>b) Indigenous knowledges/contexts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process for negotiating tender exemptions at CDU is slow and is not sufficiently responsive to projects on tight timeframes, or where community engagement and social outcomes are just as important as economic costs. In some instances the primary outcome may be the intent to develop a productive and fruitful sustainable partnership/relationship. In the case of many remote organisations, they are the sole provider of services in some communities (i.e. there is no competition), in some instances Indigenous organisations were providing in-kind support by agreeing for CDU to use space in communities where access to accommodation and office space was a premium. In the case of WCE the intent was often to build Indigenous capacity and privilege organisations underpinned by Indigenous knowledges and governance systems. Whilst all exemption requests were approved, they were unnecessarily lengthy for achieving project outcomes in a timely way.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous expertise and knowledges are rarely built into CDU tender documentation. Similarly, expectations re Indigenous employment are seldom built into contracts. Whilst the WCE initiative aimed to achieve these, this is an area where greater systemic change could occur at CDU.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.0 WCE information dissemination and sharing

The WCE placed a significant emphasis on sharing key findings about ‘what works’ and ‘why’ in relation to understanding and building Indigenous community aspirations, expectations and capacity to pursue higher education. This has spanned books, journal articles, conference presentations and invited presentations. The majority of conference presentations have been co-presented (i.e. Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff). These have spanned local, national and international conferences. Examples include:

Books/Journals


Book Chapters


Journal Articles


Conference Presentations


11.0 WCE partnerships strategy

Instruction: Please provide an outline of your institution’s partnership strategy as required under section 6.1 (a) of Part A of Annexure of the Conditions of Grant.

The WCE initiative involved multiple partnerships at a Territory-wide and community levels. This was underpinned by a Communication and Engagement Strategy. Refer to Appendix 10.

The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) were actively involved on the WCE Steering Group. The NT Department of Education’s support was strong initially and withered as the WCE initiative progressed. NAILSMA remained actively involved in all communities with land and sea management education and training activities. The Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods continues to progress the development and piloting of fire curriculum materials and training.

BIITE continued to support education and training in all sites, and was an active supporter of various WCE initiative activities, in accordance with a signed MOU.

The NT Department of Education participated in the Joint School Council Gathering, in accordance with a signed MOU. A response was not received from the CEO in relation to the Collective Statement on Remote Indigenous Education.

The strategic Priority Project on Indigenous adult English LLN has brokered numerous relationships internal and external to CDU. These emerged during the latter stages of the initiative. For example collaborations have spanned CDU - a range of faculties, departments and Centres (VET and HE); 26TEN Tasmanian Government Literacy program (LINC); The Literacy for Life Foundation - ‘Yes I Can’ community literacy campaign; Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA); Galiwin’ku Yalu’ Marnghitinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation; Jaru Learning Centre at Yendumu; The Reading and Writing Hotline (and Steering Committee); the Australian Council for Adult Literacy secretariat; Independent LLN consultants; Industry Skills Advisory Council (ISAC); Group Training/SEE Providers; Sunrise Health Aboriginal Corporation; Australian Government Departments of Employment, Education and Training, and Prime Minister and Cabinet; NT Department of Trade, Business and Innovation; Walpiri Education and Training Trust; Central Land Council; Tangentyere Council; NT Dept. of Tourism and Culture – NT Libraries; University of New England; National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) and the Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education (CEEHE), Newcastle Campus and Wollotuka Institute, Matrix on Board, Thamarrurr Development Corporation, The Adult Learning Australia (ALA) Board and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The following commentary provides a snapshot of partnership strategies at each community level:

11.1 West Arnhem

The approach to partnership development was similar across Gunbalanya and Maningrida, with an explicit focus on respectful and open two-way information sharing with Traditional Owners, a range of Aboriginal community controlled organisations, government organisations and other non-government agencies within each community. In the West Arnhem region, a partnership was developed between the WCE team and ARPNet (Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network) through a SLA. This involved ARPNet engaging two teams of Aboriginal researchers (16 in Gunbalanya, 12 in Maningrida) to undertake research with Indigenous individuals, families, Elders and young people across a number of clan groups within the two communities. The research focused on educational aspirations. WCE staff used this information
to facilitate workshops with community members to identify actions to best support Indigenous higher education pathways. These identified actions were used to develop Community Action Plans. This process provided a heightened level of community ownership. A specific partnership was developed between the WCE team, Team Health, Youth Centre (West Arnhem Regional Council) and a community-based film maker to undertake a Youth Perspectives on Education Film Project, which involved nine youth.

11.2 East Arnhem

Yirrkala

A SLA between the WCE team (CDU) and Yambirrpa Schools Council was executed in Yirrkala on the 5 May 2016. It involved a number of activities including coordination of WCE activities undertaken in community; mentoring and pathway development; workforce development through Yolŋu teacher support; Yolŋu Matha language application; iBooks and video production; exploring online learning options; research and training that engages Yolŋu teachers studying Batchelor Institute’s Advanced Diploma; customising the workplace training and assessment course to be culturally appropriate; showcasing and celebrating WCE activities in the community.

Galiwinku

A SLA between the WCE team (CDU) and Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw was executed on 29 June 2015, with a further variation in November 2015 until May 2016. An additional SLA was signed off in May 2016 to continue the partnership until the end of 2016, with a further extension granted in January 2017 until May 2017. The second SLA involved Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw having complete autonomy over all aspects of the activities developed and delivered in collaboration with Shepherds College. Activities included: mentoring school students; supporting Yolngu teachers; research on educational journeys (teachers, students and parents as participants – mostly conducted in Yolŋu Matha by Yolŋu researchers); skill development for mentors and cultural awareness workshops for non-Indigenous teachers with the participation of all teaching staff. The employment of local Yolŋu people as mentors, cultural advisors and researchers in this project, ensured that control of the work through the WCE initiative remained in the community. Respected community leaders were able to identify and implement activities that they saw as being appropriate to the Galiwin’ku context. Having community-based staff being responsible for decisions regarding people’s roles and responsibilities heightened everyone’s enthusiasm with the project and allowed many activities to progress successfully. The design and delivery of activities by these local people meant that, most of the time, relationships were already in place with those who participated in WCE activities. Having their own cultural and contextual perspectives inbuilt in their work made their contribution to the community a meaningful one. In addition to the SLAs a longer-term MOU has been executed between CDU, Yalu’ and Menzies School of Health Research. This will ensure sustainability of relationships beyond the timeframe of the WCE initiative.

11.3 Central Australia

Yuendumu

A SLA between the WCE team (CDU) and the Warlpiri Media Association (WMA) trading as PAW Media & Communications was executed on 29 May 2015. This supported the establishment of Warlpiri Research Centre designed to collect the educational histories and stories of local community members, as outlined in the Community Action Plan. A separate SLA between the WCE team (CDU) and the Central Desert Regional Council (Yuendumu Mediation Centre) was also executed on 17 May 2016 to provide a safe and supportive education environment in an effort to curb bullying and to enhance the attendance of local school children with an overarching aim to promote ongoing engagement with the education system.
**Tennant Creek**

A SLA between the WCE team (CDU) and the Nyinkka Nyunyu Art & Culture Centre was executed on 17 December 2015. This involved the provision of a culturally accessible and safe office space to engage local community members in discussions about higher education pathways. This also accommodated a space to facilitate a youth-elder event about Indigenous education pathways.
12.0 Community-level partnership networks

PARTNER / OR TYPES OF PARTNERS

Please provide a description of agreements entered into with stakeholders such as schools, VET providers, community groups, state and territory governments, or industry, as required under section 6.1 (a) of Part A of Annexure of the Conditions of Grant.

Note: Refer to the ‘Partnership Strategy’ section above which summaries major formalised partnerships involving SLAs or MOUs. WCE also partnered with a wide range of organisations within communities and via the Strategic Priority Project, these are outlined below.

Gunbalanya
1. Gunbalanya Community School/Independent Public School, including the School Council; Arrmunbu Child and Family Centre (including Families as First Teachers, Crèche and Preschool); Clontarf Foundation; Girls Academy; Nawarddeken Academy; Remote School Attendance Strategy team
2. Arrguluk Reference Group
3. Heads of Agency
4. Interagency Reference Group
5. Adjumarllarl Aboriginal Corporation, including Stronger Communities for Children (ScFc) and the Adjumarllarl Store
6. Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
7. West Arnhem Regional Council, including the Local Authority Group; Youth Centre; Women’s Safe House (previously managed by Katherine Women’s Crisis Centre); and Community Care Centre (Aged Care)
8. Injalak Arts Centre
9. Team Health
10. Gunbalanya Health Centre (Clinic)
11. Gunbalanya Police Station
12. NAILSMA
13. DEMED, including Adjumarllarl Rangers and Njanjma Rangers
14. JobFind
15. Meatworks
16. Gunbalanya Economic Development Aboriginal Corporation (GEDAC)
17. Mengerr Aboriginal Corporation (MAC)
18. Injalak Arts and Crafts Association
19. Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS)
20. BIITE
21. NAILSMA
22. Stronger Smarter Institute
23. ARPNet
24. Gunbalanya Sports & Social Club (Club)
25. JobFind, including Creative Industries
26. Department of Trade, Business and Innovation
Maringrida

1. Maringrida Community Education Centre (the School), including Maringrida School Council; Yuya Bol; Homelands Education Centres; and the Language and Culture Centre
2. Child and Family Centre, including Families as First Teachers (FAFT); Crèche; and Pre-School
3. Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation, including Remote Jobs in Community Program (RJCP)/Community Development Program (CDP); Remote School Attendance Strategy team; Djelk Rangers; Maringrida Arts and Crafts; the Wiwa Project
4. Maringrida Progress Association
5. Malabam Health Board Aboriginal Corporation, including Greats Youth Services; and Social and Emotional Wellbeing
6. West Arnhem Regional Council, including the Local Authority Group.
7. Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
8. ARPNet
9. Indigenous Contractors (INTRACT)
10. Djelk Rangers
11. Corrections
12. Maringrida Health Centre (Clinic)
13. Menzies School of Health Research
14. Other Schools, RTOs or Universities, including HK Learning; University of Southern Queensland; University of Melbourne; University of Sydney; La Trobe University; Shepherdson College; Trinity College, Ruyton High School; and Nawarddeken Academy.
15. NT Police
16. STARS
17. BIITE
18. NAILSMA
19. ARPNet
20. Northern Land Council
21. Department of Trade, Business and Innovation
22. Warddeken Land Management Rangers
23. NT Corrections
24. Safe House
25. Australian Sports Commission
26. AFL NT
27. NT Department of Education
28. Narbelek Band
Yirrkala
1. Yambirrpa Schools Council involving Yirrkala School and Yirrkala Homelands School
2. Yirrkala Homelands School
3. Yothu Yindi Foundation
4. Buku Larrnggay Mulka Arts Centre
5. Miwatj Health
6. Flinders University
7. University of Melbourne
8. Miwatk Employment Participation
9. BIITE
10. Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation

Galiwinku
1. Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation
2. Shepherdson College
3. Birrk Birrk – RJCP
4. East Arnhem Regional Council including the Galiwin’ku Community Advisory Board
5. BIITE

Yuendumu
1. Yuendumu School Council
2. Yuendumu School
3. Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC)
4. Yuendumu Women’s Centre
5. Warlpiri Media Association (WMA) trading as PAW Media & Communications.
6. Granites Mines Affected Areas Aboriginal Corporation (GMAAAC)
7. Central Land Council (CLC)
8. Warlpiri Education Board (WEB)
9. Central Desert Regional Council including the Yuendumu Mediation & Justice Centre
10. Mampu Maninja Kurlangu Jarlu Patu Ku Aboriginal Corporation (Yuendumu Old People’s Program)
11. Prime Minister & Cabinet (PMC)
12. BIITE
13. Warlpiri Education Training and Trust (WETT)
14. Yuendumu Magpies Football Aboriginal Corporation
15. Child and Family Centre

Tennant Creek
1. Nyinkka Nyunyu Art & Culture Centre
2. Tennant Creek High School
3. Tennant Creek High School - School Council
4. Tennant Creek Primary School
5. Tennant Creek Primary School – School Council
6. Tennant Creek Youth Leadership Group
7. Red Cross
8. Anglicare
9. Catholic Care
10. Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
11. Department of Education
12. BIITE
13. Barkly Region Alcohol and Drug Abuse Advisory Group
14. Barkly Regional Council
15. Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation
16. Papulu Apparr-Kari Aboriginal Corporation
17. Patta Aboriginal Corporation

**Strategic Priority Project on Indigenous adult English LLN**

1. Adult Learning Australia (peak body)
2. Adult Literacy services
3. ALPA - Arnhem land Progress Aboriginal Corporation
4. Australian Council for Adult Literacy (ACAL)
5. Australian Government: Department of Education and Training: Foundation Skills (Canberra)
7. Australian Government: Department of Employment (NT)
8. Australian Government: Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (Top End and Central Australia)
9. NT Dept. of Tourism and Culture: Northern Territory Library service
10. NT Department of Trade, Business and Innovation: Strategic Policy - Training
11. Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC)
12. Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)
13. CDU - Adult Literacy and Numeracy team – Top End and Central Australia Adult Literacy team support; CDU – VET; International Graduate Centre of Education; Northern Institute
14. Industry Skills Advisory Council (ISAC) NT
15. LINC Tasmania, Literacy Services
16. Literacy for Life Foundation
17. Mungkarta Homeland Learning Centre
18. Paw Media, Yuendumu
19. Reading and Writing Hotline
20. STEPS Education and Training
21. Sunrise Health Service Aboriginal Corporation, Katherine
22. Tangentyere Council, Alice Springs
23. Tanyah Nasir Consulting Services
24. University of New England
26. Walpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC)
27. Willowra Learning Centre
28. Australian Council of Private Education and Training
29. Mission Australia
30. Yalu Margithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation, Galiwinku
13.0 Partnership activities

Section 6.1 (a) of Part A of Annexure of your Conditions of Grant asks you to provide an outline of the key Partnership activities (where these are not already described under activities and milestones above) indicating:

- number, type and geographic location of schools or other institutions involved; and
- number of students who participated and, where possible, their age and/or year level for school attendees.

Evaluation data confirms that up until 30 June 2016 there had been 101 discrete community-level events/activities directly involving 2,406 individuals.

The table below for activity between July 2016 – August 2017 reports 86 discrete community activities/events involving 2,312 people (excluding who were directly involved in mediation centre activities - fights resolved (9) and family mediations conducted (8) at Yuendumu where figures are unavailable).

To arrive at a final figure for the purposes of this Final Report of (101+86) discrete community level activities/events = 187 with 4,718+ people directly involved.

Note: this figure does not include community meetings where larger numbers may have attended, and inflated these figures considerably. Also, a further 135+ persons have been directly/actively engaged in major Strategic Priority Project activities/events(4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership Activity, Schools and other Partners June 2016 – August 2017</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Age or Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career’s Expo</td>
<td>Gunbalanya Independent Public School</td>
<td>20-30 estimated (25)</td>
<td>Years 10-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heads of Agency meetings (of service providers) (two meetings)</td>
<td>Gunbalanya</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Non Indigenous and Indigenous representatives of senior positions in key organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maningrida</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelands Education meeting</td>
<td>Maningrida</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6 x Indigenous male and female senior teachers living/working on 5+ outstations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 x Non Indigenous Visiting Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 x Non Indigenous Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 x Non Indigenous Assistant Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>Partner Activity, Schools and other Partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maningrida School</td>
<td>50 +</td>
<td>Career’s Expos (two expos)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School Staff workshop (two workshops)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Market Day at Lurra Festival</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>200+</td>
<td>Interagency Workshop (two workshops)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Board members, Elders, Traditional Owners workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Board members, Elders, Traditional Owners workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Yuya Bol workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Yuya Bol workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Arguluk Reference Group final meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21 +</td>
<td>Youths Perspectives on Education Film Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Youth Perspectives on Education Film Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60+ +</td>
<td>Garage Festival</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 to 18</td>
<td>Conference Participation – Youth Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunbalanya</td>
<td></td>
<td>(two activities held)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Conference Participation – Youth Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Conference Participation – Youth Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Partner Activity: Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Final Report
- Location: Maningrida School, Maningrida, Gunbalanya, Darwin
- Number of participants: 50+, 10, 200+, 21, 30, 18, 18, 10, 21+, 9, 60+, 2, 6 to 18, 18 to 25, 22 to 32
- Age or Year: Middle and Senior School students (Maningrida, Milingimbi and Ramingining), CDP workers (Gunbalanya)
- June 2016 – August 2017
- **Career’s Expos**
  - Middle and Senior School students (Maningrida, Milingimbi and Ramingining)
  - At the request of the school, educational pathways information, course information, merchandise provided to Maningrida community members.
  - Representatives of senior positions in key organisations

**Partnership Activity, Schools and other Partners**
- **Market Day at Lurra Festival**
  - Maningrida 200+
  - At the request of the school, educational pathways information, course information, merchandise provided to Maningrida community members.

**Interagency Workshop**
- Maningrida 21
- Representatives of senior positions in key organisations

**School Staff workshop**
- Maningrida 30
- Non Indigenous teaching staff, 1 Indigenous teacher

**Yuya Bol workshop**
- Maningrida 18
- All Indigenous teaching and general staff

**Board members, Elders, Traditional Owners workshop**
- Maningrida 10
- All Indigenous

**Arguluk Reference Group final meeting**
- Gunbalanya 15+
- 13 x Indigenous, 2 x non Indigenous

**Youth Perspectives on Education Film Project**
- Gunbalanya 9
- All Indigenous

**Garma Festival**
- Gukula 60+
- All Indigenous

**Conference Participation – Youth Leadership**
- Darwin 2
- 6 to 18
- 22 to 32
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership Activity, Schools and other Partners June 2016 – August 2017</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Age or Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Mentoring by Senior Community Leader s</td>
<td>Yirrkala</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>5 to 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mentoring by Young Indigenous Role Model</td>
<td>Yirrkala</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yolŋu Team Teacher Mentoring and Tutoring Support</td>
<td>Yirrkala</td>
<td>15 BI students</td>
<td>24 to 42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Yolŋu Teach Workforce Development                            | Galiwin’ku | **Session 1:** 30 (17 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Session 2:** 34 (13 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Session 3:** 30 (4 Yolŋu teachers*)  
**Session 4:** 26 (14 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Session 5:** 25 (9 Yolŋu teachers) – some Yolŋu teachers were away attending training in Darwin  
*funeral and ceremonies* | 18+        |
| • School-based Cultural Awareness Training                      | Galiwin’ku | **Week 1:** 31 (12 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Week 2:** 22 (10 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Week 3:** 29 (15 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Week 4:** 26 (10 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Week 5:** 18 (6 Yolŋu teachers*)  
**Week 6:** 15 (5 Yolŋu teachers*)  
**Week 7:** 28 (14 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Week 8:** 38 (11 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Week 9:** 30 (10 Yolŋu teachers)  
**Week 10:** 32 (14 Yolŋu teachers)  
*funeral and ceremonies* | 18+        |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership Activity, Schools and other Partners</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Age or Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Indigenous Leaders Conference</td>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22 to 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• iBooks Workshop</td>
<td>Yirrkala</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26 to 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Culturally Appropriate Cert IV Training and Assessment Course</td>
<td>Yirrkala</td>
<td>12 BI students</td>
<td>23 to 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Homeland Research Workshops</td>
<td>Yirrkala</td>
<td>10 BI Students</td>
<td>22 to 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Music Workshop</td>
<td>Jabiru</td>
<td>2 students</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 Community Leaders</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School Council meetings (3 meetings)</td>
<td>Tennant Creek</td>
<td>12 x 3 = 36</td>
<td>18+ (school council representatives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School staff meeting professional development (2 meetings)</td>
<td>Tennant Creek</td>
<td>25 x 2 = 50</td>
<td>18+ (staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yuendumu Graduation Ceremony, Careers Expo and awards to Local employees</td>
<td>Yuendumu</td>
<td>800 (entire community and partners)</td>
<td>1-80+ (local)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 events in one day)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community School Safety Program</td>
<td>Yuendumu</td>
<td>Classrooms assisted X 53</td>
<td>5 – 16yrs+ (local)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fights resolved: 9 (participation figures unknown)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Support/Counselling sessions: 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family mediations: 8 (participation figures unknown)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mediations: 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total persons directly involved: 1,060</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yuendumu School Council</td>
<td>Yuendumu</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5-70yrs+ (local)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Warlpiri Research Centre: Indigenous research project</td>
<td>Yuendumu</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40-60 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership Activity, Schools and other Partners</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>Age or Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlpiri Research Centre: Strengthening relationships with Universities</td>
<td>Yuendumu</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50-60yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Metaphors</td>
<td>Yuendumu</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Leadership consultation and development</td>
<td>Yuendumu</td>
<td>40 leaders</td>
<td>40yrs+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult English Language, Literacy and Numeracy Nov. 2016 Workshop</td>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult English Language, Literacy and Numeracy July 2016 Workshop</td>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult English Language, Literacy and Numeracy April 2017 Stakeholder Meeting</td>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAILSMA I-Tracker and computer training for rangers</td>
<td>Gunbalanya</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAILSMA I-Tracker training for VETIS students</td>
<td>Gunbalanya</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAILSMA Indigenous Land Management Native Title Workshop with senior rangers, cultural advisors, teachers, teacher assistants and community members – ‘propose appropriate uses of traditional customs’ (AHCLM301A)</td>
<td>Darwin (for participants from Maningrida and Yirrkala)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAILSMA Native Title Workshop – Elliott</td>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>10 (Traditional Owners)</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAILSMA I-Tracker training workshop including Traditional Owners and Triple P employees</td>
<td>Elliott</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership Activity, Schools and other Partners</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>Age or Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 3XNAILSMA planning workshops</td>
<td>Elliott</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rise UP Be Your Best, Own Your Future</td>
<td>Galiwin’ku</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Training course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mediation training (Bali)</td>
<td>Yuendumu</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total discrete events/activities held is 86

2,312+ participants
DECLARATION

I declare that:

- I am authorised by the university to sign this form on its behalf; and
- To the best of my knowledge, the information that I have provided in this application is true, correct and accurate in all particulars.

I understand that:

- The provision of false or misleading information or the making of false or misleading statements to the Commonwealth is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth).
- If any actual or potential conflict of interest arises, I must notify the Commonwealth immediately in writing of the facts giving rise to the actual or potential conflict of interest and to take such steps as the Commonwealth may require so as to resolve or otherwise deal with any conflict of interest that may arise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Professor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Given name</td>
<td>Adrian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surname</td>
<td>Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact details (Project Manager or equivalent):

Name: Allison Stewart
Position: Program Manager
Contact number: 08 8946 6595 or 0476 828 557
Email: Allison.Stewart@cdu.edu.au
Date: 11 September 2017
Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme

www.remotengagetoeedu.com.au
Appendix 1 – WCE Initiative Timeline

From 1st December 2013 to 31st August 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>December 2013</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• HEPPP Grant awarded to CDU – OPVC-IL from Australian Department of Education to deliver the WCE initiative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>February 2014</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• First WCE Steering Group Meeting</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March 2014</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Second WCE Steering Group Meeting</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>May 2014</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Third WCE Steering Group Meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MoUs signed between OPVC-IL and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), and OPVC-IL and the Northern Territory Department of Education. These MoUs outlined two-way responsibilities for these partnerships within the WCE initiative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July 2014</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• First WCE Initiative staff member recruited; Program Manager commenced on 1st July 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Service Agreement with the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) was executed to plan and implement land and sea management activities that promote higher education pathways</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fourth WCE Steering Group Meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August – September 2014</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• OPVC-IL Report prepared: Scoping of the whole-of –community engagement initiative (by Lisa Watts, in consultation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruitment of campus-based staff, including Community Engagement Leaders x 3; Mentor &amp; Enrichment Officers x 3; Community Teacher's Liaison Leader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Team induction conducted at the end of September 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fifth WCE Steering Group Meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>October – November 2014</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Variation approved on 13th October 2014 by the Department of Education and Training (to include a sixth site and extend operations until July 2016)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruitment of Project Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partnership with the Research Centre for Health and Wellbeing was established to support Social Network Analysis (SNA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sixth WCE Steering Group Meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SNA capacity building workshop conducted with the team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community consultations and engagement commenced in all sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
December 2014
• Service Agreement with the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL) at CDU was executed to develop Indigenous fire curriculum materials

January 2015
• First WCE team workshop (campus-based staff only) held at Lake Bennett
• Beginning of Community-based staff recruitment including Community-based Researchers, Community Research Leaders, Community Mentors, Education Team Leaders, Education Engagement Facilitators, and Cultural Advisors
• Community engagement and activities began
• WCE logo finalised

February-March 2015
• Research & Evaluation Manager commenced (0.5FTE)
• Cyclone Lam and Cyclone Nathan impacted on community engagement activities in the Top End
• Seventh WCE Steering Group Meeting
• WCE branding finalised

May-June 2015
• Service Agreement with PAW Media and Communications was executed to support research activities in Yuendumu
• Service Agreement with Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw Indigenous Corporation to support research and mentoring activities in Galiwin’ku
• Eighth WCE Steering Group Meeting
• Second WCE team workshop (campus-based staff only) held in Darwin

July 2015
• Ninth WCE Steering Group Meeting
• WCE website launch remotengagetoeedu.com.au

August 2015
• Facilitated the Remote Indigenous Researcher Forum in partnership with BIITE - 27 attendees
• Evaluation Coordinator commenced (0.8FTE); Research and Evaluation Manager became Research & Evaluation Advisor (0.2FTE)

September 2015
• Youth from Yirrkala and Tennant Creek visited CDU and BIITE campuses
• Variation approved on 17th September 2015 by the Department of Education and Training (to incorporate strategic priority projects focus into WCE initiative and extend operations until December 2016)
• Service Agreement with Nyinkka Nyunyu Culture Centre was executed to provide a culturally safe working space in Tennant Creek
October-November 2015
• First WCE newsletter sent to stakeholders, government agencies, media and communities
• Service Agreement and MoU with ARPNet was executed to support participatory action research activities in the West Arnhem region
• Tenth WCE Steering Group Meeting
• CDU facilities management permitted WCE to use the Yirrkala demountable as a resource to support education and training in Yirrkala
• WCE staff assisted with organisation of, and participated in, the National Forum on Indigenous Pathways and Transitions into Higher Education, CDU
• Strategic Priority Manager (SPP) commenced employment

December 2015
• Third WCE team workshop (campus-based and community-based staff) held in Darwin
• Research ‘Us’ established as a result of the Remote Indigenous Researcher Forum

February 2016
• Remote WCE staff and stakeholders participated in a visit to CDU and BIITE campuses to learn more about higher education pathways and support services available
• Eleventh WCE Steering Group Meeting

April 2016
• Fourth WCE team workshop (campus-based and community-based staff) held in Tennant Creek
• Second WCE newsletter sent to stakeholders, government agencies, media and communities

May 2016
• Joint School Council Gathering jointly convened with the Yambirrpà Schools Council in Yirrkala. This resulted in a Collective School Council Statement on Remote Indigenous Education. 20+ people participated
• Service Agreement with the Yambirrpà Schools Council was executed to support education, training and mentor activities in Yirrkala
• Service Agreement with the Central Desert Regional Council was executed to support a mediation service implemented through the Yuendumu School
• A second Service Agreement with Yalu Marngithinyaraw Indigenous Corporation was negotiated to further advance research and mentoring activities in Galiwin’ku

June-July 2016
• Twelfth WCE Steering Group held in Alice Springs. Steering Group representatives were invited on a tour to Yuendumu to meet with local WCE stakeholders
• An MOU was established between CDU and Research ‘Us’
• SPP organised a CDU internal workshop on English language, literacy and numeracy access and issues
August 2016
• Dr. Kimai Tocker joined the WCE team as a Visiting Scholar from the University of Auckland
• Fifth WCE team workshop (campus-based and community-based staff) held in Maningrida

September 2016
• WCE team awarded an Australian Rural Education Award by the Society for the Provision of Rural Education in Australia

October 2016
• Thirteenth WCE Steering Group meeting held in Darwin
• Draft Community evaluation reports due to WCE Management

November 2016
• Partnered with BIITE, the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory (AMSANT) and OPVC-IL on the delivery of the 2016 Indigenous Leaders’ Conference held at CDU. More than 280 participants. There were 16 presentations, workshops or panel discussions delivered by the WCE team
• Organised and facilitated the Remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit in partnership with BIITE. 30+ participants
• Organised and facilitated a pre-conference workshop on Indigenous adult English language, literacy and numeracy. 80+ participants, 26 presenters, 28 organisations
• WCE team nominated for a 2016 Vice Chancellor’s Award for Exceptional Performance by General staff in the Team category

December 2016
• 31st December - WCE remote community operations ceased
• All contracts of campus-based and community-based staff completed
• Third WCE newsletter sent to stakeholders, government agencies, media and communities

January 2017
• Variation to extend SPP component of WCE until 31st August 2017 was executed on 16th January 2017 (Project Coordinator, Evaluation Coordinator and SPP Manager continuing)

June 2017
• Fourteenth Steering Group meeting held in Darwin

July 2017
• Draft Final WCE Report and Final WCE Evaluation Report circulated to Steering Group for comment
• Final Community Evaluation Reports published
August 2017
- Introduction of, and welcome to, Professor Adrian Miller, the new Pro Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership at CDU, to the Steering Group
- Final WCE Progress Report and Final WCE Initiative Evaluation Report Submitted to Government
- Final WCE Initiative Evaluation Report published
- All remaining WCE staff complete contracts (SPP Manager extended until 30th September 2017)

October 2017
- WCE Audit Report Due

December 2017
- 15th December - end of WCE initiative contract
Appendix 2 – WCE Final Evaluation Report
The WCE logo was created at the beginning of the initiative to represent unity and a shared vision. The design was created by Darwin based Indigenous artist Jessica Sariago, who has Djaru heritage from the WA Kimberley region.

The narrative, on which the design is based, is available on the WCE initiative website. The logo was co-developed by Dr. Lisa Watts, Ms. Donna Stephens and Ms. Aurelie Girard in consultation with other WCE staff.

Go to: https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/about/

Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.

DISCLAIMER

This document reports on the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative and includes information about internal evaluation findings. A separate evaluation report has been written for each of the six participating WCE communities. These Community Evaluation Reports are included as appendices to this report and are available at https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/resources/. The information presented in this report and in each WCE Community Evaluation Report was written by the stated authors and does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the WCE initiative as a whole or of the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Acknowledgements

The WCE initiative was funded by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme (HEPPP). The Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University (CDU) is extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to undertake this initiative. The WCE team wishes to acknowledge the generosity, support, friendship and guidance provided by remote Indigenous community education leaders, Elders, teachers, researchers, facilitators, mentors, students and youth who played a pivotal role in WCE strategy and delivery. We also wish to sincerely thank all Indigenous corporations and other organisations and individuals who have in some way been a part of the WCE initiative, of which there are many. It would be impossible to name each person with whom we have worked closely over the past three years. We are extremely grateful for each person’s contributions, which included time, thought, friendship, skills, knowledge and experience.

Particular thanks goes out to the WCE initiative Steering Group who provided guidance and advice throughout the project, and whose participation often included extensive travel and contribution of time. Thanks to Dr. Gretchen Ennis who led the Social Network Analysis process and provided much support for using it along the way. Thanks also to Jessica Sariago, who designed the WCE initiative logo.

The WCE team are especially grateful to our key partners:

- Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership, CDU: Professor Steven Larkin (former Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership), Wendy Ludwig, Cheryl Godwell, Kim Robertson, Shane Motlap, Melissa Royle, Aoife Muldowney, Ann Macabuhay, Erica Luchich, Simone Heinrich and all other OPVC-IL staff.
- Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Education and Student Success, CDU: Professor Martin Carroll and Alison Reedy.
- Other current and past CDU staff: Inoka Perrera, Priscilla Santos, Baden Jones, Anna Ikonomou, Janet Watson, Frank Barroccu, John Antley, Wendy Kennedy and Lorraine Sushames.
- Northern Territory Department of Education: Sally Hodgson and John Harris.
- North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management: Angela Shima, Melissa George, Erica McCreedy and Matalena Tofa.

We also would like to acknowledge our community level partners and our other partners, particularly:

- Yalu’ Marnghithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation (Galiwin’ku)
- Yambirra Schools Council (Yirrkala)
- Nyinkka Nyunyu Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre (Tennant Creek)
- Yuendumu School (Yuendumu)
- Yuendumu Mediation Centre (Yuendumu)
- PAW Media and Communications (Yuendumu)
- Aboriginal Research Practitioners Network (ARPNet - Territory wide)
- Steve Sutton and the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods

We would also like to acknowledge the contribution of the team who worked on the original submission for WCE: Prof. Steven Larkin, Prof. Martin Carroll, Alison Reedy, Dr. Bronwyn Rossingh and Lorraine Sushames.
WCE Team members

- Allison Stewart (Strategic Priority Projects Manager, 2015 – 2017; WCE initiative Program Manager early – late 2017)
- Anne Lowell (Research and Evaluation Manager, 2014 – 2015; Research and Evaluation Advisor 2015 - mid 2016)
- Aurelie Girard (Project Coordinator, 2014 - 2017)
- Ben Christie (Project Support Officer, 2016)
- Dr. Bronwyn Rossingh (Yirrkala Community Engagement Leader, 2014 - 2016)
- Cat Street (Evaluation Coordinator, 2015 - 2017)
- Cedric Egan (Yuendumu Education Team Leader 2015 - 2016)
- David Scholz (Tennant Creek Mentor and Engagement Officer, 2016)
- Dean Yibarbuk (Gunbalanya and Maningrida Mentor and Engagement Officer, 2015 - 2016)
- Djuwalpi Marika (Yirrkala Community Co-researcher, 2015 - 2016)
- Donna Stephens (Community Teacher's Liaison Leader, 2015 – early 2016)
- Dr. Elaine Lawurrpa Maypilama (Galiwin’ku Community Research Leader, 2014 – early 2016)
- Dr. Eliani Boton (Galiwin’ku Mentor and Engagement Officer, 2016)
- Elizabeth Katakarinja (Yuendumu Community Co-researcher and Facilitator in Education Engagement, 2015 - 2016)
- Fiona Shalley (Senior statistician, mid 2017)
- Gabrielle Egan (Yuendumu Education Team Leader 2015)
- Geoffrey Shannon (Tennant Creek Community Researcher, 2015 - 2016)
- A/Prof. James Smith (Program Manager, 2014 - early 2017)
- Jamie Hagan (Gunbalanya and Maningrida Mentor and Enrichment Officer, 2014 - 2015)
- Jimmy Langdon (Yuendumu Male Mentor in Community Education Engagement, 2015-2016)
- Kade Green (Tennant Creek Mentor, 2015 - 2016)
- Keresi Motonicocoka (Administration and Finance Officer, 2016)
- Dr. Lisa Watts (Yuendumu Community Engagement Leader, 2014 - 2016)
- Maree Melican (Community Teachers’ Liaison Leader - 2015)
- Matalena Tofa (Galiwin’ku and Yirrkala Mentor and Enrichment Officer, 2014 - 2015)
- Melissa Janssen (Temporary Project Coordinator, 2016 - early 2017)
- Millie Olcay (Gunbalanya and Maningrida Community Engagement Leader, 2014 - 2016)
- Natasha Zurvas (Administration and Human Resources System Improvement Officer – 2015)
- Peta Fraser (Tennant Creek Mentor and Enrichment Officer, 2014 – mid 2016)
• Rosemary Gundjarranbuy (Manager – Yalu Marngithinyawar Aboriginal Corporation – Galiwin’ku, 2015 - 2017)
• Sarah Katz (Audiovisual Support – mid 2017)
• Seraine Namundja (Gunbalanya Community Liaison Officer, 2016)
• Serina Namarnyilk (Gunbalanya and Maningrida Mentor, 2015)
• Simon Fisher (Yuendumu Community Research Leader, 2015 - 2016)
• Prof. Steven Larkin (Former Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership, 2014 – mid 2016)
• Dr. Terry Moore (Community Teacher’s Liaison Leader, 2016)
• Valda Shannon (Tennant Creek Community Researcher, 2015 - 2016)
• Wendy Ludwig (Acting Pro-Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership, mid 2016 - 2017)
• Yalmay Yunupingu (Yirrkala Community Co-researcher, 2015 - 2016)
• Yananymul Mununggur (Yirrkala Community Co-researcher, 2015 - 2016)
Executive summary

The WCE initiative was implemented in response to recommendations made by the *Review of Higher Education Access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People* (Behrendt et al., 2012). It aimed to ‘inspire six remote and very remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory (NT) to include higher education as a normal expectation and milestone along the life journey’. The WCE initiative adopted a participatory action research approach and worked in partnership with remote Indigenous communities in efforts to ‘establish strong and sustainable educational pathways into higher education’.

Implementation in participating remote communities of this new initiative occurred over two and a half years; negligible time within the remote Northern Territory (NT) context when considering the complex issues affecting education and education pathways that are at hand. It cannot be emphasised enough that in this setting, short-term funding timeframes work against efforts to facilitate community understanding, ownership and control over programs, projects, research and, critically, outcomes. Even though several project staff had pre-existing relationships within communities, substantial time and investment was required to develop respectful and trusting relationships and build understanding about the initiative itself amongst the team and within communities before things could get going. The short timeframe placed significant pressure on the project to move things forward, and this caused a sense of ‘rushing’ to some extent throughout. Time constraints impacted on the planning and design phase, implementation of activities, the developmental learning process, on dissemination efforts and on the overall aim of establishing ‘sustainable pathways’. After approximately one year of building trust and understanding, momentum for a variety of community-led and owned initiatives was established. Despite the challenges described above, this report reinforces the fact that with adequate time and the use of flexible, culturally informed approaches, initiatives such as this can be owned and led by remote Indigenous communities.

A flexible participatory action research approach was adopted. Participatory action research was attempted in combination with a developmental evaluation approach to facilitate group collaboration and reflection, and involvement and leadership of Indigenous community-based staff throughout the research and evaluation process. Adhering to the key principles that underpin these approaches did support local project ownership and assisted in embedding remote Indigenous voices in the data collected that focused on exploring perspectives around higher education. The trialling of this approach together within this project design with a combination of other factors, described within this report, however, led to some significant shortfalls in the internal evaluation process, which ultimately had consequences for the project overall.

Through the WCE initiative, strong relationships were formed between a number of key stakeholders in education institutions and members of partner communities. There is also evidence to suggest that some inter-community relationships between community-based organisations and local level networks were strengthened. The WCE initiative’s valuing of Indigenous knowledges and cultural practices was seen as significant by remote Indigenous community stakeholders. This approach, in contrast to the often seen ‘one size fits all’ approach that often overlays mainstream education policy and programs in the remote Indigenous setting, generated strong levels in interest and engagement in community projects. Some of the Indigenous community-based staff employed through the initiative were inspired to continue on with further study and engage in ongoing education and research, which of course, is also indicative of their commitment to supporting the educational aspirations of themselves, their families and communities. By the end of operations, conversations held in local settings stimulated thought and debate around

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1 The aims of the WCE initiative as outlined in the WCE initiative funding application developed by OPVC-IL at CDU (Larkin, 2015).
pathways into higher education; a concept that was compared to ‘finding your way through a jungle’ for remote Indigenous community members.

All staff employed through the initiative experienced the challenges of operating in complex intercultural settings and supported each other to overcome these tensions. This applied to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff. A key theoretical concept supported by data obtained through the WCE initiative was ‘interculturality’. This report contends that interculturality should be a priority area for further research in this context.

At both community and ‘systems’ levels, some positive developments began to emerge during the final year of the initiative. The WCE initiative has contributed to the Indigenous higher education evidence base; particularly in relation to establishing a deeper understanding about the perspectives of remote Indigenous communities about higher education, and enablers and barriers to access, participation and outcomes in higher education. Through much reflection and activity, there are some indications that highlight the influence of the WCE initiative on community dispositions towards higher education. Much groundwork has been done to research and catalyse action for improving Indigenous adult English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) policy and services in the NT. Collaborative efforts have strengthened support for a Territory-wide Indigenous adult English LLN policy framework or strategy. A network of interested LLN practitioners, educators, researchers, academics, and individuals from government and non-government bodies has been established and, at the time of writing, work involving this network was ongoing.

There are two sets of recommendations within this report. A set of recommendations are included that relate to program implementation, which will be useful for policymakers and programmers to consider in future design and delivery of similar projects in remote Indigenous settings. A second set of recommendations from the six participating remote communities were developed through an exploratory research process that saw a deep level of engagement of remote Indigenous community leaders and stakeholders. These recommendations include suggestions for schools, higher education institutions, other education providers, governments, and researchers and are framed around the higher education needs and aspirations of remote Indigenous communities in the NT.

This initiative found that common themes emerged across all partner WCE communities in relation to community perspectives about higher education. These themes were around the importance of, for example, cultural education as a foundation for all learning, culturally safe institutions, quality community engagement processes, accessible information about education and higher education pathways and support, Indigenous involvement in school and community governance, family engagement, academic and cultural mentoring, youth leadership development, and English language literacy and numeracy. These themes have emerged from research conducted in partnership with experienced remote Indigenous community leaders. Literature regarding the need for Indigenous community-driven research agendas to inform action for change substantiates the significance of these identified themes. These are clearly outlined in this report and it is hoped that they will be used to inform and support decision making for policies, programs and services in the Indigenous higher education space.
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List of acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABA</td>
<td>Aboriginal Benefits Account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACIKE</td>
<td>Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges &amp; Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATSIHEAC</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Advisory Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIITE</td>
<td>Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDU</td>
<td>Charles Darwin University</td>
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<tr>
<td>DET</td>
<td>Australian Government Department of Education and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPMC</td>
<td>Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEPPP</td>
<td>Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISSP</td>
<td>Indigenous Student Success Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITMS</td>
<td>Information Technology Management Services (CDU Department)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LLN</td>
<td>(English) Language, Literacy and Numeracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAILSMA</td>
<td>North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>National Priority Pool funding (Dept. of Education and Training)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTCET</td>
<td>Northern Territory Certificate of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT DoE</td>
<td>Northern Territory Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPVC-IL</td>
<td>Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAR</td>
<td>Participatory action research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCHW</td>
<td>Research Centre for Health and Wellbeing (CDU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIEL</td>
<td>Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (CDU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTO</td>
<td>Registered Training Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA</td>
<td>Service Level Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCE</td>
<td>Whole of Community Engagement (initiative)</td>
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</table>
**Definitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aspiration</strong></td>
<td>‘A hope or ambition of achieving something.’ – The Oxford Dictionary.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Balanda</strong></td>
<td>A term used by Yolŋu people in East Arnhem region of the Northern Territory for ‘non-Indigenous person/people’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Both-ways philosophy</strong></td>
<td>‘Both ways learning’ refers to an approach in which learning together occurs through the sharing of Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges (Bat &amp; Shore, 2013; Boyukarri et al. 1994; Christie, 1987; Harris, 1980; Marika, 1999).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campus-based WCE staff</strong></td>
<td>WCE initiative team members based in Darwin or Alice Springs; campus-based staff regularly travelled to partner remote Indigenous communities to work with community-based WCE team members. The original campus-based team were employed between July 2014 and January 2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community-based WCE staff</strong></td>
<td>WCE initiative team members based in partner remote Indigenous communities. These team members were local Indigenous leaders with significant experience in education, health, community development, research, governance and other fields. Community-based staff were employed between January 2015 and early 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complexity</strong></td>
<td>In the context of complex adaptive systems, this refers to the notion that there are a large number of elements (for example, individuals, groups, organisations) that interact in many diverse and unpredictable ways. Complexity and systems thinking theories can be used to guide innovation for social development in situations in which solutions are not straightforward (Cleveland, 1994; Williams &amp; Van’t Hoft, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical pedagogy</strong></td>
<td>A philosophy of education that is concerned with transforming power relations that are oppressive and lead to the oppression of people through awakening of the critical consciousness (Aliakbari and Faraji, 2011). This approach is most commonly associated with Brazilian educator and activist Paulo Friere and is underpinned by principles of critical theory of the Frankfurt school (Freire, 1970; Guess, 1981).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Developmental evaluation is an evaluation approach that can assist social innovators develop social change initiatives in complex or uncertain environments. It facilitates real-time, or close to real-time, feedback to program staff thus facilitating a continuous development loop. According to Patton (1994; 2011), developmental evaluation is particularly suited to innovation, radical program re-design, replication and complex issues. Developmental evaluation supports innovation development to guide adaptation to emergent and dynamic realities in complex environments. Innovations can take the form of new projects, programs, products, organisational changes, policy reforms, and system interventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>‘The process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university.’ - The Oxford Dictionary. The WCE initiative recognised intercultural forms of education within this definition, that is, diverse educational practices that were relevant to people living in remote Indigenous communities and were inclusive of traditional Indigenous ways of knowing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Further education</strong></td>
<td>Education beyond schooling that includes higher education and post-school education that does not include acquisition of a degree, such as Vocational Education and Training (VET) and adult learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Higher education</strong></td>
<td>Formal post-secondary school education in which degrees are obtained; often delivered at universities, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes, academies and colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>For the purposes of this report ‘Indigenous’ refers to Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and/or Australian first nations people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous knowledge</td>
<td>Indigenous knowledge in the WCE initiative referred to the knowledges acquired by individuals through the lived experience of being Indigenous, but not by being Indigenous alone. That is, Indigenous standpoints are also informed by other aspects of individual and collective identities (Nakata, 2007). Such knowledge can include understanding about, for example, traditional Indigenous kinship and lore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interculturality</td>
<td>Interculturality refers to the intersection of multiple and partly discrete cultures, to individuals’ interaction across these intersections, and to the resultant evolution of culture (Dervin, 2016; Holliday, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>‘Facts, information, and skills acquired through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject.’ – The Oxford Dictionary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Participatory action research (PAR) | A research approach that involves a cyclical process of critical reflection, knowledge construction and action. Generally PAR is underpinned by the following common principles:  
  • A collective commitment to investigate a ‘thematic concern’ (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988).  
  • A desire to engage in self- and collective reflection to gain clarity about the issue under investigation.  
  • A joint decision to engage in individual and/or collective action that leads to a useful solution that benefits the people involved.  
  • Power sharing throughout the research process so that participants have control over the research process, including over how the research is used (McIntyre, 2008; McTaggart, 1997; Tandon, 1988). |
| Vocational Education and Training (VET) | Education and training for the acquisition of qualifications in job-related and technical skills, in industries such as trade, office work, retail, hospitality and technology. |
| Warlpiri                    | This term refers to Indigenous people and languages of the Tanami region of the Northern Territory.                                           |
| Yolŋu                       | This term refers to Indigenous people and languages of the East Arnhem region of the Northern Territory.                                        |
1. Introduction

This is the final evaluation report for the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative, a participatory action research project led by the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership (OPVC-IL) at Charles Darwin University (CDU). The WCE initiative aimed ‘to inspire six remote and very remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory (NT) to include higher education as a normal expectation and milestone along the life journey’ (Larkin, 2013).

The implementation period of the majority of this initiative was from July 2014 until December 2016, with remote community operational components happening from September 2014 through to December 2016. In addition, a Strategic Priority Projects (SPP) component was implemented from December 2015 through to September 2017.

The WCE partnered with six remote and very remote communities:
- Galiwin’ku
- Gunbalanya
- Maningrida
- Tennant Creek
- Yirrkala
- Yuendumu

Figure 2: WCE initiative partner communities.

Additional documentation included as Appendices to this report includes evaluation reports for each WCE initiative community, a timeline for the WCE initiative, reflections on the internal evaluator’s role and a discussion around different models of participatory action research utilised in the WCE initiative (see page 8 for list of Appendices).

These documents are also available at:

www.remotengagetoedu.com.au

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2 The original project aim was outlined in the WCE initiative funding application developed by OPVC-IL at CDU (Larkin, 2013). A more detailed discussion around project aims is included in Chapter 4.

3 Communities were defined as remote and very remote based on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Remoteness Structure (ABS, 2014).
**WCE initiative objectives**

The objectives of the WCE initiative were:

‘Using whole-of-community engagement strategies, inspire six targeted remote and very remote Indigenous communities to include higher education among their normal expectations, by:

- exploring current community perspectives of higher education, and linking these with existing strategies for achieving quality of life aspirations;
- co-creating ongoing opportunities for community, research, academic and public policy leaders to engage in mutually beneficial and critical relationships; and
- identifying means for making education relevant and culturally and physically accessible;

with a view to establishing strong and sustainable educational pathways from early childhood to lifelong post-secondary education.’

**Aim of this report**

The purpose of this evaluation report is to provide an overview of the design and implementation of the WCE initiative and a summary of internal evaluation findings. The report provides some findings drawn from the six partner remote Indigenous communities (see Figure 2). It is to be noted that this is report is based on the findings of an internal developmental evaluation process.

**Outline of this report**

*Chapter 1* describes the WCE initiative objectives and the purpose of this report.

*Chapter 2* provides an overview of the WCE initiative, its design, establishment and implementation phases.

*Chapter 3* outlines the WCE initiative evaluation design, approach, methods and process.

*Chapter 4* summarises key learnings relating to WCE initiative design, approaches, methods and processes.

*Chapter 5* reflects on achievements of the WCE initiative.

*Chapter 6* outlines some positive developments and opportunities that emerged as a result of WCE implementation.

*Chapter 7* describes the limitations of this evaluation.

*Chapter 8* puts forward recommendations for future research, policy and programs in relation to higher education for remote Indigenous communities.

*Chapter 9* provides a conclusion to this evaluation report.

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4 The WCE initiative ‘developmental’ evaluation process was not a true ‘developmental evaluation’ as outlined by Patton (2011). Refer to Chapter 4 regarding the WCE initiative’s attempt to implement a developmental evaluation.
2. The WCE initiative

This chapter will provide a description of the WCE initiative. This includes a brief background relevant to the initiative and a summary of its establishment, design and processes.

Background

In terms of higher education participation, access and outcomes, the need for targeted investment into higher education programs and services for Indigenous people is clear, particularly for those living in remote Indigenous communities (Behrendt, Larkin, Griew, and Kelly, 2012). Indigenous people are less likely to obtain an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), less likely to participate in university, less likely to be admitted to university on the basis of their prior educational achievement, and are more likely to be mature aged students (DIISRTE, 2012; SCRGSP, 2011). The statistics generally demonstrate further disparities with increasing remoteness. The proportion of admissions to higher education at CDU from high school for non-Indigenous people from both urban or regional areas (17%) and remote areas (16%) is higher than that of Indigenous people (Charles Darwin University, 2017). Only eleven percent (11%) of Indigenous people in urban and regional areas are admitted to higher education from high school, and in remote locations this drops to eight percent (8%) (ABS Census of Population & Housing, 2011). In terms of education more broadly, data published by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) highlights that very remote Indigenous students fall well behind their non-Indigenous counterparts in both attendance rates and academic performance (ACARA, 2016; Turnbull, 2017).

Currently, low numbers of Indigenous students from NT schools progress into higher education. Only two percent of Indigenous people in the NT aged 18 to 19 years old are enrolled in university; in 2011 only nine percent of Indigenous students at CDU were admitted from high school. This is in contrast to fourteen percent of that of the non-Indigenous cohort at CDU. Very few articulate from VET into higher education. At CDU, four percent (4%) of non-Indigenous people in remote locations are admitted to higher education through enabling courses compared to ten percent (10%) of remote Indigenous people (ABS Census of Population & Housing, 2011, Australian Charles Darwin University, 2017).

Aside from the obvious benefits in individual empowerment, decision-making and community livelihoods, improving higher education outcomes for equity groups will positively influence Australia as a whole. The Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education (2008) identified that improving Indigenous higher education access and outcomes will bring significant social and economic benefits to Australia as a nation. If the educational level of Australia’s Indigenous population was comparable to that of the non-Indigenous population, $1.09 billion per annum would be added to the Australian economy (Access Economics, 2008).

The funding application for the WCE initiative was submitted to the Australian Government on 5th June 2013 in response to a nationally competitive Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme (HEPPP) funding round co-ordinated by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training (DET). This was a response to recommendations of the 2012 Behrendt Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. The review explicitly highlighted that contextualised approaches to strengthening pathways into Indigenous higher education are needed.
Important contextual considerations

A number of political, organisational and relational factors are important to consider when reading this report. These are described below:

• In late 2014, when the WCE initiative was in the early establishment phase, the Review of Indigenous Education in the Northern Territory was released (Wilson, 2014). This review contained a number of recommendations for the NT Department of Education that had implications for the WCE initiative. Most significantly, the Wilson Review recommended that financial support be withdrawn from remote NT secondary schools and funding redirected to secondary schools in urban centres instead. It was suggested that a minimum number of students were required to make remote secondary schools viable and that boarding schools were a preferred option. The NT Department of Education was a key partner in the WCE initiative. There was some feedback during initial community consultations that this decision about boarding schools was impacting on individuals and families. This affected initial engagement processes due to the level of uncertainty around secondary school funding and the potential for movement of some students into urban locations.

• The NT Department of Education (NT DoE) released the Indigenous Education Strategy 2015-2024 in January 2015. The Strategy was developed in response to recommendations of the Wilson Review. Feedback from communities highlighted there was some dissatisfaction regarding levels of Indigenous consultation during development of the Strategy, and inclusion of some programs that may not be considered appropriate to the NT context. Views were expressed that some strategies were contrary to the views of Indigenous parents and families. This created a tension between the intent of the WCE initiative and the NTG education policy environment. That is, the WCE initiative was promoting engagement and consultation, and broadly researching views on higher education (and ultimately education in general); the NT DoE was implementing a new Indigenous education strategy that had been resisted by some remote Indigenous communities. While the NT DoE actively participated in the Steering Group there was never a senior level representation on the Steering Group despite various requests of this nature.

• Responsibility for Indigenous higher education programs was transferred from the DET to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) in 2014. Indigenous higher education policy was, however, retained by the DET. Equity higher education program and policy responsibility was also retained by DET, including HEPPP projects. The Indigenous higher education sector has expressed ongoing concerns about coordination of Indigenous higher education program and policy responsibilities between DET and DPMC, particularly in relation to the Indigenous Student Success Program (ISSP).

• The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Advisory Council (ATSIHEAC) was abolished in 2016. This was a national Ministerial advisory body for Indigenous higher education matters.

• Federal and Territory elections occurred in 2016, seeing the Labor party elected to power in the NT and the Liberal party re-elected nationally. In the lead up to these elections, this brought further uncertainty to the political environment.
• CDU released its ten-year Connect Discover Grow – Strategic Plan 2015-2025 in late 2015 reasserting its commitment to Indigenous leadership, regional engagement and research. These strategic commitments all relate to various aspects of the remote Indigenous community aspirations articulated through the WCE initiative. However, the commitment of funding to support key aspects of implementation has been slow, and had not been finalised at time of writing this report. CDU, as with many other education institutions in the NT, is experiencing significant revenue challenges and as of 2017 was undertaking a restructure process, with an emphasis on measures to support aspirations for ‘growth and sustainability’ (Maddocks, 2017). Considering the significant resourcing required for remote Indigenous education services and support, a number of stakeholders expressed concern that adequate resourcing for Indigenous education may not be feasible for CDU within its Connect Discover Grow strategic plan.

These factors, individually and when combined with one another, generated levels of increased complexity and/or uncertainty and significantly impacted on the establishment and implementation of the WCE initiative.

**The WCE approach**

**Theoretical approach**

The WCE initiative was premised on three concepts outlined in 2013 by Professor Steven Larkin, the former Pro Vice-Chancellor of Indigenous Leadership at CDU. These were:

1. That universities have much to learn from and about each other, and that parity of esteem is therefore a given;
2. That communities will achieve their higher education aspirations better when their own leaders (Elders, teachers etc.) have the required information, resources and relationships rather than being dependent upon intermittent and de-contextualised approaches from university staff; and
3. That academic and research leaders will better support communities with educational services when they can work in partnership with those communities to create effective, lifelong pathways.

The WCE initiative was also premised on critical pedagogy theory, most often related to the work of Freire (1970), who states that meaningful education, and therefore initiatives working towards equality, require a ‘profound trust in people and their creative power’ (p.56). The design of the WCE initiative was grounded in critical pedagogy theory where Indigenous worldviews experiences and ideas were fundamental to planning and implementation.

‘Everything that’s going to be coming our way we’re going to have to make sense of that one... it will be our job, make it clear first for our self and even if we have to put it into a cultural context, you know, culture way, our way, the way we see the world.’

- WCE Initiative Community Researcher, Tennant Creek.

Consistently mentioned by community leaders and Elders throughout the WCE initiative was the ‘Both Ways’ philosophy. The Both Ways philosophy, conceptualised by Harris and developed further by Yunupingu (Harris, 1980; Yunupingu, 1991), is well known amongst Indigenous researchers and experts and is commonly cited as being mandatory when working in remote Indigenous settings.

---

5 "Both Ways' philosophy refers to an approach in which learning together occurs through the sharing of Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges (Bat & Shore, 2013; Boyukarri et al. 1994; Christie, 1987; Harris, 1980; Marika, 1999).
‘... Sometimes Balanda6 teachers don’t understand; they just want to come here and do work to fill up their pocket and go. But they don’t want to learn. These are the sort of things that we want you to understand - the Yolŋu’ way - because we want to share information so you can walk with Yolŋu, so that you can walk with us as Balanda. Because you can teach me, but I will also teach you.’

- WCE Initiative Community Researcher, Galiwin’ku.

There is increasing discourse regarding the disadvantages of focusing on failure and deficit in political dialogue that relates to Indigenous education matters, such as the ‘Closing the Gap’ policy. The statistics and policy discourse in recent times tell only part of the story. By describing a ‘gap’ that must be ‘closed’, current education policy does not acknowledge the rights of Indigenous people to be able to express their cultural heritage and to be able to pursue their own education goals (Guenther, n.d.). If the education aspirations of Indigenous people are to be realised, there is merit in reframing the deficit model, recognising the valuable role that Indigenous communities and populations play in contemporary Australian society, and building on local strengths. This was a key feature of the WCE initiative approach.

Operational Approach

Vital to the implementation of these approaches was program flexibility. Every remote Indigenous community possesses diversity in culture, language, landscape, vegetation, wildlife, governance, infrastructure, community services, and social, economic and political histories and circumstances. The initiative aimed to harness this diversity and ensure that activities were contextually relevant and locally driven. The WCE team recognised the limitations of a program logic model in the context of this work, and that local Indigenous leaders and stakeholders needed to have primary leadership in such areas as undertaking data collection and analysis, defining local needs and priorities, and planning future action and direction. Remote community life is highly unpredictable and the ability to adapt is crucial – local leadership was the logical and preferred action and learning approach.

The approach adopted by the WCE initiative generally relied on the strengths and commitment of each participating community and the individuals, groups and organisations within them to lead research and action. This approach is counter to deficit models and disempowering processes often present in policy and discourse relating to Indigenous issues. There is growing evidence that this continual focus on failure runs the risk of becoming self-fulfilling in maintaining ethnic discrimination (Riley and Ungerleider, 2012). Through a deficit lens, blame is externalised and families, schools and communities are seen to be the cause, which absolves policy makers of responsibility (Lowe, 2011; Sarra, 2008; Vass, 2013). Embedding a strengths-based approach was important to the creation of an environment of conducive to positive aspirations.

‘We are very, very rich people.’

- WCE Initiative Community Researcher, Galiwin’ku.

The ‘whole of community’ engagement approach explored a wide variety of partner remote Indigenous community perspectives around education and higher education. Initially, it was hoped, that this would establish local projects that had high levels of engagement and interest with individuals, families and organisational stakeholders and therefore be primarily community-driven.

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6 Balanda is a term used by Yolŋu people of the East Arnhem region to refer to non-Indigenous people.
7 Yolŋu refers to Indigenous people and languages of the East Arnhem region of the Northern Territory.
It was also considered that identifying, disseminating information and facilitating local discussion on the features of an effective and functional educational ‘pipeline’ or ‘pathway’ from school and from VET into higher education was essential. This required a focus on the relationships and other factors that could facilitate a more streamlined pipeline. It involved taking a broader view to education, recognising that pathways into higher education required establishment of collaborative partnerships between leaders in communities, other relevant community stakeholders, and those responsible for higher education service delivery in the NT.

**WCE Communication and Engagement Approach**


Key principles that were outlined in this Strategy are outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thoughtful</strong></td>
<td>- this will involve adopting a consultative and strengths-based approach; communication will be timely, consistent and regular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genuine</strong></td>
<td>- this will involve taking time to establish relationships with community leaders and families that are built on trust and respect; expectations will be carefully managed; communication will be community focused, inclusive and transparent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meaningful</strong></td>
<td>- this will involve clear and concise messaging (not too academic); with the support of community leaders communication will be delivered in local language, wherever possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethically appropriate</strong></td>
<td>- this will involve a commitment to community engagement and decision-making that is guided by national and global Indigenous ethical frameworks; this also involves acknowledgement and ownership of intellectual property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culturally respectful (in both approach and delivery)</strong></td>
<td>- this will involve an awareness of matriarchal and patriarchal decision-making processes, which will ensure responsiveness to local cultural practices; community leaders will be adequately remunerated for sharing and contributing Indigenous knowledges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participatory</strong></td>
<td>- this will involve project partners working collaboratively (‘with’ not ‘on’ or ‘about’) to enhance a sense of ownership and minimise feelings of disempowerment; this will ensure that outcomes are directed by, and benefit, the local community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Considerate of, and responsive to, first languages</strong></td>
<td>- this will involve honouring primary/first languages; the use of trained interpreters will also be supported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Underpinned by two-way learning approaches</strong></td>
<td>- this will involve engaging with both Indigenous and Mainstream/Western (academic) knowledge systems equally, with a view of supporting the co-creation of knowledge and aspiration development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Key principles outlined in the WCE Initiative Communication & Engagement Strategy.
Governance

The WCE initiative worked with a number of key partners in the remote Indigenous education space. These included:

- OPVC-IL and the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Education and Student Success (previously the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Academic) at CDU
- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)
- NT DoE
- North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA)
- Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges & Education (ACIKE)

The WCE Steering Group

Representatives from each key partner together with representatives of each partner remote Indigenous community formed the WCE Steering Group, which met approximately on a quarterly basis. A total of 15 Steering Group meetings were held across the course of the initiative, including a final Steering Group meeting planned for August 2017 at the time of writing this report. These were held on:

- 6th February 2014
- 6th March 2014
- 22nd May 2014
- 30th July 2014
- 25th August 2014
- 27th October 2014
- 16th February 2015
- 11th May 2015
- 13th July 2015
- 14th October 2015
- 17th February 2016
- 23rd June 2016
- 25th October 2016
- 6th June 2017

Generally, the remote community representatives were also employed by CDU as members of the WCE team. Within the team they were referred to as ‘community-based’ staff. These members began to attend Steering Group meetings from 11th May 2015 onwards. Specific functions and responsibilities of the Steering Group as outlined in the Terms of Reference included:

a) To oversee the WCE program and ensure that it is conducted in accordance with the HEPPP Conditions of Grant
b) To approve the plans, performance measures and budgets for each subproject.
c) To monitor progress, including expenditure, and provide advice to the HEPPP WCE staff team.
d) To facilitate achievement of the project within the respective institutions represented on the Steering Group.
e) To promote discussion and dissemination of information regarding best practice in achieving the WCE objectives.
f) To provide the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership with such information as is required for the purposes of acquittal and reporting to Australian Government.
WCE Partnerships

It was intended that the formalisation of partnerships would result in a range of benefits and help to establish sustainable communication channels between key project partners and communities. These partnerships were outlined through regular progress reporting to the Australian Government. The intention was to open up opportunities for system and practice improvements through, for example, formalising Indigenous education pathways and strategic workforce priorities - at both the community and institutional level. It was envisaged the establishment of community partnerships would provide a greater level of localised community control. The range of formalised agreements developed with other organisations and agencies are outlined below.

Formal agreements with key partners

MoUs with BIITE and NT DoE

BIITE and NT DoE signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with CDU in May 2015 which outlined responsibilities of each partner agency such as sharing of facilities and infrastructure, sharing of relevant data, support for relationships development, and commitment to internal systems improvements based on community priorities.

Service Level Agreement with NAILSMA

A Service Level Agreement (SLA; i.e. contract for goods and services) was signed with NAILSMA on 30th July 2014, and was varied in September 2014 and again in August 2016. This contract enabled NAILSMA to lead activities that promote higher education pathways in land and sea management. NAILSMA’s specific objectives within the WCE initiative were to:

a) Articulate the links between Indigenous aspirations for management of country and the benefits and opportunities of engaging in higher education;

b) Identify opportunities and impediments to greater Indigenous participation in higher education in the context of land and sea management, including livelihood development;

c) Provide on-country, in-university and other opportunities for Indigenous community leaders and members to learn about and engage in research and higher education, including but not limited to activities relevant to Indigenous land and sea management; and

d) Encourage the growing interest of young Indigenous people in career paths towards a number of topic areas including rangers and Natural and Cultural Resource Management, and linking this to the requirements for individual success in primary, secondary and higher education (NAILSMA & CDU, 2014).
Other formalised partnerships

**SLA with the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL)**

An SLA was executed with RIEL on 16th December 2014 to lead the development and piloting of an Indigenous fire curriculum specific to the Northern Australia context.

**SLA with the Research Centre for Health and Wellbeing (RCHW) at CDU**

An internal SLA was negotiated with the RCHW at CDU to provide Social Network Analysis (SNA) training to WCE initiative staff. This was executed on 14th November 2014. This work was supported by Dr. Gretchen Ennis and also involved collecting and presenting three waves of social network analysis data as part of the evaluation process.

Formalised partnerships in communities

**SLA with Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation**

A partnership with Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation in Galiwin’ku was established through the execution of two separate SLAs on 29th June 2015 (with a variation executed on 13th November 2015) and 20th May 2016. This partnership involved the delivery of a student mentoring program, research support, the delivery of cultural awareness training, and skills development for staff.

**SLA with Yambirrpa Schools Council**

A partnership with Yambirrpa Schools Council in Yirrkala was established through the execution of an agreement on 5th May 2016. The partnership involved the delivery of workforce development of Indigenous teachers, research about Yirrkala and homelands education history, mentorship and pathway development activities, production of Yolŋu Matha language resources, and community-based graduation celebrations that promote pathways into higher education. A Joint Remote School Council Gathering was delivered in May 2016 as part of this partnership.

**SLA with RIEL and a MOU with the ARPNET**

A partnership with Aboriginal Research Practitioners Network (ARPNet) was established through the execution of a SLA with the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL -CDU) (auspicing on behalf of ARPNet) and a MoU with ARPNet Directors on 15th October 2015 and 20th October respectively. This was specifically to undertake research activities in the West Arnhem region (both Maningrida and Gunbalanya). This resulted in the preparation of two reports to develop community action plans owned by each of the local communities for implementation beyond the timeframe of WCE initiative.

**SLA with Central Desert Regional Council**

A partnership was developed with the Central Desert Regional Council on 17th May 2016. This was to support the Yuendumu Mediation and Justice Program to reduce bullying and increase attendance at the Yuendumu School.

**SLA with PAW Media and Communications**

A partnership was developed with PAW Media Communications in Yuendumu on 29th May 2015. This partnership involved the establishment of an Indigenous leadership group to develop a Warlpiri Research Centre with a focus on Indigenous research capacity building to document educational histories across the region.
**Licence Agreement with Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre**

A licence agreement was established with Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre in Tennant Creek on 17th December 2015. This was to provide a culturally safe space from which Indigenous staff and youth could engage and interact. This included providing a space to facilitate a youth-elder event about Indigenous education pathways.

**MOU with Research ‘Us’**

A MOU was developed between Research ‘Us’ and OPVC-IL on 2nd August 2016 as a result of the WCE initiative. The purpose of this was to build educational research capacity in remote Indigenous communities.

**Ethics approval**

Ethics approval for the WCE initiative was granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Charles Darwin University on 16th October, 2014. Regular communication occurred with the CDU Human Research Ethics Committee throughout the WCE initiative.
### WCE initiative timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding application submitted</td>
<td>June 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding application successful</td>
<td>Dec 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Manager recruited</td>
<td>July 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Social Network Analysis (SNA) workshop and first visits to remote communities</td>
<td>Oct 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Evaluation Manager recruited</td>
<td>Feb 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second WCE team workshop</td>
<td>June 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Coordinator recruited</td>
<td>Aug 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third WCE team workshop</td>
<td>Dec 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Timeline

- **2013**
  - **Design & Early Establishment** (Late 2013 – Sept 2014)
  - **Establishment in Communities** (Oct 2014 – mid 2015)

- **2014**
  - **Campus Based Staff Recruited** (July 2014 – Jan 2015)
  - **Community Based Staff Recruited** (Jan 2015 – Early 2016)
  - **Steering Group Meetings**
  - **Strategic Priority Project Implementation** (Oct 2015 – Sept 2017)

- **2015**

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Notes:

- Steering Group meeting dates are listed on page 20. Please note a full timeline of the WCE initiative is included in Appendix 7.

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22 Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Final Evaluation Report
Design and initial establishment of the WCE initiative

The design and early establishment phase took place between late 2013 and September 2014. In 2013, a small working group of high level academic and research staff at CDU developed the funding application for the WCE initiative on a very tight timeline. The Australian Government submission timeframe did not allow enough time to consult with potential communities, nor to conduct feasibility or readiness assessments. OPVC-IL was informed of the successful grant application on 20th December 2013. Funding for the WCE initiative was released to CDU in January 2014. There were significant internal delays in transferring cost-centre management to OPVC-IL, which was sorted by July 2014. Essentially this delayed commencement by six months, with the exception of some initial Steering Group meetings. CDU also received $360,000 less than what had been requested in the funding application.

The WCE Manager was recruited in mid-2014 and was tasked with establishing a team and setting up operations in five remote communities over an initial two year timeframe. An early variation was negotiated in October 2014 to expand the scope to six remote communities based on the under-spend from the delay in commencement. The timeframe was later extended until December 2016, changing operational implementation to a two and half year timeframe, through an additional variation request in September 2015. Within the existing budget allocation a subsequent variation was negotiated in January 2017 to extend the Strategic Priority Project (SPP) focus of WCE until 31 August 2017. The remote operations of WCE generally ceased in December 2016, the end date of all remote team contracts. Refer to timeline on pages 23 and 24.

During the first six months of 2014 representatives of key partner organisations met on a bimonthly basis. This marked the formation of the WCE Steering Group, who met to discuss specific design features of the initiative based on the original design contained in the HEPPP submission. Project planning also commenced.

Initial activity of the Steering Group included consolidation of Steering Group membership and finalising of the Terms of Reference, WCE site selection, initial budgeting, discussions around evaluation and reporting requirements, and WCE Manager recruitment. The first round of recruitment for the WCE Manager and other staff was a collaborative effort by several Steering Group representatives.

The WCE Coordinator had secretariat responsibility for the Steering Group, as per the Terms of Reference. There was a significant delay in recruitment to the Coordinators’ position, and the Coordinator did not commence employment until December 2014. As a consequence, significant additional financial and administrative burden was placed on the initial workload of the Program Manager during the early establishment phase of the project.

Establishment in participating communities

Site selection and community consultation

Potential WCE communities were initially short-listed by the Steering Group based on a broad range of criteria including school and Vocational Education and Training (VET) enrolment and completion data, existing infrastructure (such as broadband width, Child and Family Centres, Trade Training Centres), the presence of ranger and/or learning on country programs, existing relationships and projects with key partners or with CDU, location and perceptions of community readiness. Once identified and prioritised by the Steering Group, WCE staff commenced consultation with each of the communities beginning in October 2014. All identified communities expressed an interest in participating.
WCE staffing (the WCE team)

A team of 27 staff members in total were recruited incrementally by the WCE at various points throughout the funding period. Approximately half of the team were ‘campus based’, that is, operating from CDU campuses in Darwin and Alice Springs. These staff members operated on a ‘fly in, fly out’ arrangement, travelling regularly between Darwin and Alice Springs and WCE partner communities. Campus-based team members participated in a week-long induction process at the end of September 2014. The remainder of the team were termed ‘community-based’.

Community-based staff were local Indigenous community leaders with a passion for education and resided and worked in their home communities.

Recruitment began with three Community Engagement Leaders (CELS) and three Mentor and Enrichment Officers (MEOs) roles. These staff were employed to work collaboratively in two communities each, operating as ‘regional teams’ (see Figure 4). WCE key partners were involved in the initial recruitment process. Several of the individuals recruited had pre-existing relationships with individuals, families and organisations in their designated communities, which assisted in ‘speeding up’ the relationship development and project establishment process.

Two other campus-based team members were also employed during this early stage. These roles were:

- Community Teachers’ Liaison Leader (December 2014), and
- Research and Evaluation Manager (February 2015)

The entire WCE team was employed in a flat organisational structure, in which the entire team of almost 27 team members were supervised by the Program Manager. This meant that no staff members, aside from the Program Manager, had authority over anyone else. It was considered that this would be ideal to enhance involvement of staff in the decision making process. Whilst the original intent was that WCE campus-based staff would work in pairs in two communities, over time operational decisions were made so that campus-based team members worked with one community each, rather than across two communities.

Other campus-based staff members that were recruited as the initiative progressed included additional Finance and Administration Support staff (during 2015 and 2016), an Evaluation Coordinator (August 2015) and the Strategic Priority Projects Manager (November 2015). In 2016 the MEO title was re-named to become ‘Mentor and Engagement Officer’ as it was reported that the term ‘enrichment’ may not have been appropriate.

The CELs and the MEOs began the consultation process in communities in late 2014. This initially involved each CEL and MEO working with two communities. They began speaking with relevant stakeholders, and obtained referrals from them about others in the community that were appropriate to talk to about education related matters. Recruitment of community-based staff was a priority activity. It took time, however, to speak with enough people to determine who would be employed. Sometimes names were put forward and they were already employed with other organisations. Some communities had Indigenous community-based staff recruited as late as July 2015.

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8 These terms were agreed to by all staff at a WCE team gathering in December 2015.
The various community-based staff roles that were established and recruited to between January 2015 and July 2015 included:

- Community Co-researchers
- Community Liaison Officer
- Community Research Leaders
- Education Team Leaders
- Facilitator in Education Engagement
- Mentors
- Mentor and Engagement Officer
- Mentor in Community Education Engagement

*In early 2016 a MEO was recruited who resided at Kabulwarnam, a homeland community near Gunbalanya.*

**Figure 4:** Map of evolution of WCE initiative staffing across partner communities.
Planning and reporting on WCE community projects

The campus-based team spent a significant amount of time during the establishment phase discussing a range of topics such as principles of engagement, roles and responsibilities, and developmental evaluation and participatory action research processes. Team building activities were conducted, including a two day staff retreat in January 2015. Staff members had the chance to get to know one another, participate in collaborative planning and discussion, and consider how they would begin the engagement process in each community. During this period they also received training on research methods that they may not have come across before, such as Social Network Analysis (SNA).

The regional teams developed early Community Action Plans in collaboration with the Program Manager using the Quality Improvement Program Planning System (QIPPS). QIPPS is an online planning tool, and was considered by many on the team to not be fit for purpose. In particular, it could be challenging to use and was considered not to be inclusive enough of community-based staff, as many of them did not have access to a computer or the internet. The team came to agreement in late 2015 to not utilise QIPPS, and to instead develop Community Action Plans written in a way that would be easily accessible to all members of the team including other interested stakeholders in communities.

Teams were required to write a field trip report after each visit to community, in addition to six monthly progress reports as part of Australian Government reporting requirements, reports for the Steering Group, and updates for team workshops. It was intended that these reports would always be written collaboratively by campus-based and community-based staff, however, this was not always possible due to a number of challenges discussed in Chapter 4.

WCE community project implementation and activities

CEls and MEOs initially travelled to two communities each, approximately once every month. Consequently trips were busy, with many meetings occurring with stakeholders from across each community during each visit. One of the priority tasks for the regional teams was to negotiate appropriate arrangements with local stakeholders for working in partnership. In four communities this involved negotiating service level agreements (SLAs) with local organisations, through which staff and other resources could be deployed.

The initiative was originally conceptualised to focus on ‘improving the relatively low number of Indigenous students progressing through the school system and completing year 12 who have both aspirations for further study and are academically prepared for the demands of higher education’ (Larkin, 2013, p.6). As time progressed, the initiative responded to a wider range of expressed needs and major themes. Refer to Chapter 4 for more details.
Strategic Priority Projects

In consultation with the Australian Government through an agreed contract variation towards the end of 2015 a number of Strategic Priority Projects (SPPs) were initiated from within CDU to stimulate appropriate systems level responses and positive change. An SPP Manager, based in Darwin, was employed in November 2015 to lead the projects. These projects were a response to common themes which had been identified across the communities through interview, team discussions and stakeholder input. Initially these projects were:

1. Indigenous adult English Language Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) policy and programs in CDU and the NT.
2. Strengthening the educational pathway between VET and higher education for Indigenous students.
3. A whole of university approach to improving outcomes for Indigenous students from the NT

Activities undertaken for each SPP included interviews, research, desktop literature reviews, preparation of grant applications, and feeding information into the preparation of academic papers/journal articles. During the second half of 2016, however, it was decided to limit activity to one strategic area. The primary focus became Indigenous adult English LLN, a concern that had emerged as a significant community-identified constraint to access, progression and attainment not only in higher education but along the educational pathways, in work\(^9\) and in life.

The decision to pursue the English LLN project was informed by an expert consultative group who recognised:

- the extent of the need for improvement in LLN policy, programs, services and resources;
- the potential for making a real contribution in the short-term through consultation and collective action; and
- that there was considerable Indigenous and multi-sectoral stakeholder support for action in this area.

A full description of the English LLN strategic priority project is included on pages 61 and 62.

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\(^9\) It is to be noted that most Indigenous students from the NT who enter higher education are mature age and functioning within a workplace (CDU, 2017).
Team gatherings

The team came together approximately three times per year for collaborative team workshops. From December 2015 onwards this included all community-based staff, who had not all been employed at the time of the preceding workshops. These workshops were generally held in Darwin however in response to requests from community-based staff, one workshop was held in Tennant Creek and one in Maningrida. These team gatherings usually lasted four days, with time required on either side of this for travel to and from remote and very remote locations. These workshops were an opportunity for the team to:

- consolidate the WCE team through building relationships, understanding and rapport;
- listen to teams working in each community present an update of processes, activities and progress;
- reflect collectively on a range of areas including key concepts and themes, ideas, successes and opportunities;
- communicate updates and receive feedback from the organisational level (WCE initiative management, evaluation and CDU as a whole); and
- discuss the LLN SPP, receive updates on progress, feed in Indigenous perspectives, engender team support and obtain input into planning.

Community-based staff were supported to travel to Alice Springs and Darwin several times a year for a variety of reasons. Most regularly, they attended Steering Group meetings, which were held approximately quarterly. They also came to the university campuses for several team workshops and to attend important events. They also were flown to Darwin and, on some occasions other capital cities around Australia, to present at conferences and forums to support information sharing and research dissemination – a priority emphasised by community-based staff.

In April 2016 at the Tennant Creek WCE team workshop, a plan for the remainder of the year was devised to ensure that teams would be on track to complete all required tasks by the end of the year. At this point, some teams were still collecting research data that explored community perspectives of higher education. A line was drawn in the calendar so that June 2016 was the last chance to conduct final data collection. Collaborative data analysis was to be conducted between May and October, with a draft of the final evaluation reports due at this point. The final two months would be spent on other reporting requirements, completing any remaining community activities and finalising community evaluation reports.
Attempts to secure further funding and extend WCE activity

Throughout the latter part of 2016, 13 grant applications were submitted by the WCE team (some in collaboration with key partners) to continue addressing community identified needs and priorities. The applications were submitted to the 2016 HEPPP National Priorities Pool (NPP) funding round and the Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA) funding round. The proposed projects included:

1. Indigenous governance and leadership in remote schools: What impact does this have on remote Indigenous secondary student aspirations for further education?
2. Strengths-based stories: Strengthening participation in higher education through examples of success from remote Indigenous communities
3. Indigenous-led review and development of education policies: Framework for implementation (led by NAILSMA)
4. Out of school – Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) policy, programs and best practice for remote Indigenous Australians
5. Unlocking higher education capacity in East Arnhem Land’s multilingual/intercultural heritage
6. Recognition of Indigenous peoples’ prior traditional and cultural knowledges (led by NAILSMA)
7. Developing a model: Whole of university approach to remote/regional Indigenous higher education
8. Enabling Aboriginal higher education access and participation from remote and regional Northern Territory (led by BIITE)
9. Remote Indigenous Success in Education (RISE) Together (proposed extension of WCE over three and a half years)
10. A collaborative network for Indigenous adult English language literacy and numeracy (LLN) in the NT
11. Indigenous adult LLN in the NT: Engagement, feasibility and innovation
12. A cultural and intercultural awareness program for Galiwin’ku
13. Building remote Indigenous research and evaluation capacity through Research ‘Us’
14. Strengthening Indigenous school leadership and governance in the NT

Many days of staff time were spent writing the above applications, including scoping and designing projects, preparing budgets, assessing risks and garnering community, stakeholder and sectoral support. Unfortunately only one of the above grants was successful, and then only partly. Application (3) three above was funded however the budget was significantly reduced and therefore the project has deviated significantly from the original design and intent. This was a disappointing outcome for priorities that had been identified in WCE communities.
3. Evaluation outline

This chapter includes an overview of the evaluation approach and methods that were employed throughout the WCE initiative. Refer to Chapter 4 for additional details regarding the evaluation process, and to Appendix 8 for a reflections about the internal evaluator’s role.

Research and evaluation approaches

The WCE initiative attempted to combine research and evaluation approaches that are, in theory, suited to complex settings. Participatory action research and developmental evaluation approaches were selected by the WCE Manager and the Research and Evaluation Manager in late 2014 and early 2015, in consultation with the newly recruited campus-based team. It was anticipated that the key principles underpinning these approaches – such as collaborative learning and inclusiveness – would be suitable for the project aims and setting (Baum, MacDougall, and Smith, 2006; Patton, 2011). A ‘flexible’ approach to participatory action research was chosen, meaning that the research approach adopted in each community would be unique. It was theorised that this would support variability of contexts and variability of skills and knowledge of the staff employed through the initiative. In addition, both these approaches support emergence and adaptation. In plain language this means that we know things do not always happen as predicted, and by choosing these approaches we would be prepared to adjust and respond as needed. Importantly, this also meant that local Indigenous researchers could drive their own research process. This is consistent with some of the principles that underpin Indigenous standpoint theory outlined by a number of Indigenous academics (see, for example, Rigney, 1997, Moreton-Robinson, 2013, Nakata, 2007, Smith, 1999).

The intersection between developmental evaluation and participatory action research depends on, largely, how researchers or evaluators ‘resonate’ with different terms and how much they understand about different approaches (Patton, 2011, p. 280). Stern (1995, cited in Patton 2011) frames the linkage through the following statements (p.282):

- **Judgement and explanation require analysis, on the one hand, and**
- **Development and empowerment require action, on the other.**

**Action research integrates judgement with development, and explanation with empowerment – and thereby combines:**

- **Analysis with action**
- **Theory with practice**

At the remote community level, informal action and reflection cycles were undertaken by WCE teams. Project focus areas and research and evaluation approaches in each community project varied significantly. This led to difficulty in establishing a collective and consistent approach to collection and analysis of evaluation data and collective development across the WCE initiative.

An important challenge to note in this section was that between February to November 2015, evaluation staffing capacity was only 0.5FTE due to budget constraints from the original proposal. The Research and Evaluation Manager did not sit within OPVC-IL and was housed within the CDU Centre for Health and Wellbeing. From November 2015 onwards, evaluation capacity increased to 1.0FTE through employment of an Evaluation Coordinator (0.8FTE) and evolution of the Research and Evaluation Manager to an advisory role (0.2FTE). The Research and Evaluation Manager did not play a significant role in the early design and establishment period prior to February 2015.
Evaluation Methods

The total amount of data collected for research and evaluation purposes in the WCE initiative included:

- Interviews (272)
- Other audio, eg. videos, workshops and meetings (112)
- Field trip reports and other notes (153)
- Other reports eg. progress reports, community evaluation reports, partner action plans and reports (85)
- Other research data eg. dilly bag tool activities (Sithole, 2012), post it and butchers paper activities (30)
- Conference presentations (38)
- Diagrams, photos, stories and artwork

Evaluation Reports were written by teams working in each community (consisting of community- and campus-based team members) to document research and evaluation process and achievements in each community. These reports were written using data that had been collected at the local level. For this Whole of Community Engagement Final Evaluation Report, the data utilised included a total of 54 interviews conducted by evaluation staff, in addition to being informed by a selection of the data described above. As the developmental evaluation process did not function as had been intended, a relatively ad hoc approach to collecting and analysing data relevant to the whole initiative had to be taken for the purposes of this report.

Over the course of 2015, evaluation staff conducted reflective interviews with the campus-based team and Steering Group members to stimulate reflection about the process so far, things that were working well, challenges, and their next steps. Interviews were approximately one hour long each, semi-structured, and were guided by five discussion points:

1. Project aims and processes
2. Roles of team members
3. The process so far – strengths, challenges, changes etc.
4. Emerging issues from this process
5. Plans, expectations, ongoing concerns

Evaluation staff then facilitated a self-analysis process in which the interviewee reviewed their own interview transcript and coded themes using NVivo, in collaboration with the evaluator. This did not occur at the community level because some campus based staff were either confused about, had differing views on, or were resistant to the evaluation process; and there was also only one evaluation staff member to facilitate this process across a geographically distributed team. This process was very time-intensive due to the linguistic, cultural and environmental factors that were at play. This also did not occur with Steering Group members due to the time-intensiveness of the approach.
Two rounds of evaluation interviews were conducted with WCE team members and Steering Group members over the course of 2015. An initial Developmental Evaluation Framework was produced in May 2015 by the Research and Evaluation Manager. It was a questioning framework that included questions for reflection and further planning to assist in team and project development. It was developed based on emerging internal evaluation findings up until that point. It highlighted that a shared understanding of project scope, aims and objectives, and community planning, evaluation and dissemination strategies were key issues for the team to discuss. Subsequent discussions were held throughout 2015 between the Research and Evaluation Manager and, at that point in time, mainly campus-based team members including the Program Manager. Although regular meetings between the Research and Evaluation Manager and the WCE Program Manager took place a written evaluation progress report was not provided to the Program Manager and the WCE team until 2016. The delay in formalised reporting related to the restricted capacity of internal evaluation staff at that point in time (0.5FTE), a computer malfunction, and lost reporting content. The work had to be re-done, and the resultant report was not disseminated within the team until March 2016. Up until this point, there was a certain amount of frustration expressed by some campus-based staff regarding the lack of formal evaluative feedback that they had received.

As challenges in this process began to emerge additional funds were allocated to increase evaluation staffing capacity in August 2015. Discussions continued within the team around key opportunities for development, and the increased evaluation capacity time was also spent working with individual teams to further develop team communication. The second ‘phase’ of the evaluation process began once the WCE team co-produced the ‘WCE Initiative Planning and Evaluation Guidelines’ and a basic ‘WCE Initiative Research and Evaluation Framework’ in early February and May 2016, respectively. The Evaluation Coordinator then proceeded to continue to conduct interviews with campus-based team members and community-based team members (whenever possible), and with Steering Group members. The approach to this was relatively ad hoc as the workload had increased significantly with one position attempting to capture and analyse evaluation data relevant across the whole initiative. In addition, this next phase involved assisting to resolve some of the frustration that had been generated within the team and the Steering Group up until that point. As the evaluation data that was shared centrally from community projects was inconsistent across communities, with some staff sharing limited amounts of or no data, the evaluator began collating research themes and building on the process of ‘co-creation’ through workshopping these at team workshops to ensure consensus on emerging themes.

Towards the end of 2016, campus-based and community-based WCE team members were tasked with conducting interviews with community stakeholders to obtain information about the perceived impact of the WCE initiative in their community. The total number of community stakeholders interviewed as part of this process was 38 across five of the communities; there were no evaluation interviews conducted in one community. Stakeholders interviewed were both local Indigenous community members and non-Indigenous staff employed in community organisations. These interviews are included in the total number of interviews collected that are listed on page 32.

There were a limited number of evaluation interviews conducted in some communities throughout implementation of the WCE initiative with people other than the community-based staff (who were also community leaders). Therefore, the process evaluation findings contained in this report reflect mainly internal WCE team perspectives. Other data that support the claims made in Chapters 5 and 6 of this report include a selection of the data outlined on page 32.
Time constraints, evaluation staffing capacity and implementation factors significantly limited the level of analysis that could be conducted. NVivo was utilised, although there were limits to how thorough this process could be considering the varying scope, quantity and quality of evaluation data captured across communities. Themes relating to process evaluation (including themes relating to community priorities for action) were coded in a relatively methodical manner. NVivo was also used to code data relating to recommendations from WCE communities in Chapter 8.

**Social network analysis (SNA)**

SNA is best thought of as a research paradigm rather than a single approach or method. SNA involves the methodical study of social networks. A social network is a set of social actors (e.g. people, groups, organisations) and the ties (relationships) between them. Networks can be visualised using a social network diagram or graph (Hill, 2002).

It was decided by the WCE Manager in consultation with external staff who had expertise using SNA that this approach would be useful to track evolution of networks over time in order to map the community engagement process. A three day team workshop in October 2014 was attended by the campus-based team and a, external Social Network Analysis (SNA) Consultant. Dr. Gretchen Ennis from the CDU School of Health. At this workshop, WCE’s approach to using SNA was designed collaboratively by the campus-based team and staff were trained in its use and application. Within the WCE team the SNA process was supported by Dr. Matalena Tofa. This report will reflect on use of SNA in the WCE initiative in Chapter 4.
4. Key learnings – design, approach, methods and process

This chapter will summarise the key lessons learnt through the implementation process of the WCE initiative. It is to be noted that the recommendations included in this section do not necessarily imply that certain things were not done or that efforts were not made to do certain things. It is also highlighted that recommendations should not be considered as being based on isolated events or processes. The recommendations reflect summative judgements around what has been learnt through evaluation of the WCE initiative and/or confirmed from existing literature.

Design and planning

The WCE initiative was designed to, in the first instance, explore a wide variety of community perspectives about higher education within remote and very remote Indigenous communities. The aim was to establish initiatives that achieved high levels of engagement and interest of individuals, families and organisational stakeholders in research and activity that was led by local Indigenous community members.

‘Give us the power. In the past, Balanda [non-Indigenous people] have been coming from their own perspective saying, ‘do it my way.’ No, this is wrong, we want to do it our way. This is what we want.’

- WCE Initiative Community Researcher, Yirrkala.

There exists a tension in working in a way that is genuinely ‘community-led’. Community priorities differ across communities and regions depending on many factors, which can be at odds with establishing a coordinated strategy or approach to addressing issues such access to education. This is relevant to the genuine tension experienced by governments in catering to diversity and difference, but also in the context of large scale initiatives such as the WCE initiative in this setting within a limited timeframe. As examples, in Tennant Creek it became apparent that it would be difficult to focus on working in a way that was inclusive of the whole community when the process of establishing a local project reference group was delayed by complex political histories. Yirrkala and Yuendumu communities both have long histories of public advocacy within the education space and already had in place particular initiatives or programs that community members wanted to progress. Combined with several other factors outlined in this chapter, this contributed to an evolution from what the project was designed to achieve.

The team that developed the project application considered that for people living in remote Indigenous communities to be able to access higher education, first they had to finish school or achieve a certain level of educational attainment. The original intent of the project, therefore, was around academic attainment in schools. The open ended approach taken in order to respond to the needs of communities in addition to challenges in the evaluation design and feedback cycle, however, led to a vast array of differences emerging in perceptions of aims, scope and process. These existed between team members and the Steering Group and there were also inconsistencies across early key project documents. Some examples are demonstrated in Figure 5. The ‘whole of community’ phrase within the title also impacted on individual perceptions of scope, with some community projects choosing to focus on community governance systems.

The community development model adopted in this initiative was intended to enable remote Indigenous community leaders to be in control of a community-driven research and action process. There is an inherent tension between the hopes of remote Indigenous community members, who want to see change, and the world of research and policy, in which decision makers emphasise the need for evidence
and evidence-based practice. There are also endless potential solutions for change, demonstrated by the diversity of approaches taken in community-level projects.

There were differences among team members about how much emphasis should be placed on:

- researching and exploring community perceptions of higher education (and how this should be done); and
- implementing actions for change.

Some examples of varying perceptions of foci of change include:

- focus on individual level – eg. individual aspiration building; raising awareness of higher education study options and support services; building capacity of local leaders to act as higher education experts equipped with knowledge and resources.
- focus on school level - eg. increasing educational attainment in schools; influencing pedagogy and curriculums at the local level; influencing school governance systems and processes.
- focus on ‘systems’ level – eg. influencing access and participation systems and policies within institutions and governments; influencing community governance systems and processes.

Increasing educational attainment in schools:

‘The whole of the community engagement gave us more than the approach rather than the outcome. Yeah, it was more the means, the outcome was actually high attainment.’ (Steering Group member involved with project design)

Building individual aspirations:

‘The overarching aim of the project is to build aspirations, expectations and capacity of Indigenous people in remote and very remote setting to participate in higher education.’ (Campus-based WCE team member)

Increasing knowledge and awareness about higher education pathways:

‘Part of our role is to increase the understanding of what is out there so people can make informed decisions about their education pathways, and employment pathways.’ (Campus -based WCE team member)

Creating a more supportive education system:

‘... creating frameworks, processes and understanding that support communities to continue the things that we’ve identified and perhaps helped initiate’. (Campus-based WCE team member)

Figure 5: Some examples of varying perceptions of project aims and processes.

There were discussions held between the Research and Evaluation Manager and the WCE Manager around the need to clarify the aims of the WCE initiative during 2015. The Research and Evaluation Manager had identified this need through analysis of the interviews that had been conducted with (predominantly campus-based) team members and Steering Group members. The WCE Manager considered that there had been discussions with members of the Steering Group that had clarified this. Further discussion in the
team setting occurred at the December 2015 WCE team workshop and, at the time, it was considered by the WCE Manager that the team had adequately discussed the overall aims and objectives.

‘As Program Manager, I considered that the aims and objectives were discussed in length, and in detail, with WCE staff and Steering Group members on numerous occasions, both as a group and individually. This was negotiated at various points throughout the planning and implementation of the WCE and through reflective cycles consistent with PAR and DE approaches. However, interpretation of the aims differed between staff and community members, and it was important to adopt a flexible approach that allowed for contextually and culturally relevant approaches to emerge within each community and across the initiative as a whole. The tension between rigid (top-down) and flexible (bottom-up) approaches to aims and objectives had both its pros and cons throughout the implementation phase.’

- WCE Program Manager (2014 - early 2017)

The flat structure arrangement of the CELs and the MEOs caused tensions in this project design. It was a huge challenge for the WCE Manager to oversee individual projects in communities that were designed at the community level. The CELs had been employed on a higher pay scale than the MEOs thus there was a more senior level of responsibility implicit in their roles. The flat structure, however, meant they could not exert leadership and guidance in the process. The MEOs came into the project with different skillsets and backgrounds and had their own interpretations of what participatory action research should look like. In general, they had experience as practitioners and were more ‘action’ focused, which caused tension with the CELs who, in general, had more expertise in the research field.

Leadership and management roles within creative projects invariably experience a number of dilemmas (Mumford D, Scott G, Gaddis B, & J, 2002). Influence must be exerted while simultaneously encouraging autonomy, initiative, motivation and critical reflection within a team (Mumford D et al., 2002, p.711). There is a very real challenge in finding the balance between satisfying organisational demands and establishing an environment conducive to creativity and strong relationships. It was a significant challenge within this initiative to foster positive working relationships, whilst also negotiating the needs of individual team members.

The timeframe permitted by the Australian Government to develop the initial funding application was a period of only a few weeks. This made it impossible to travel to multiple sites across the NT to consult with communities on design of the initiative – a costly exercise which could have built unrealistic expectations (if the application had not been successful). The inclusion of a design and feasibility assessment phase at the outset of the WCE initiative together with a longer implementation timeframe would have enabled community input into the design of the initiative, and its aims and objectives. These aims could have been more achievable, realistic and more widely understood as a result.

The initial consultation process included building an understanding of what the project was about. This was a fundamental element to establishing the project in each community. In all cases, this occurred across multiple cultural and linguistic interfaces and it took time and patience for team members to develop an agreed understanding about what the project was aiming to achieve.
‘I need someone to break this project into pieces and help me understand before I can take it to my community. This is what I need. We are still trying to make it happen. Because why? Because the process was not explained to us properly. We need to learn about the policies, about the structures, because we don’t know. But if you give us clear information, then I can take your project, now I understand, and I can shape it, and I can break it down and explain it to my community.’

- WCE community stakeholder.

**Recommendation 1:** Ensure projects have clear aims and objectives that emphasise sustainability and are cognisant of timeframes. Revisit these regularly to ensure ongoing clarity and track progress.

**Recommendation 2:** Clarify boundaries – for programs/projects and for evaluation.

**Recommendation 3:** Embed sufficient flexibility into programs/projects to enable remote Indigenous community leaders to take the lead in determining how aims and objectives will be achieved, with support if required.

**Approach and methods**

This initiative was designed keeping in mind all of the features that we know are essential to working in complex settings (Patton, 2011). Privileging local expertise, remaining flexible and adaptable, embracing uncertainty and working inclusively were all key principles that were, in general, followed within discrete project areas that were part of the initiative. There was significant emphasis placed on listening to the perspectives of remote Indigenous community members and valuing their expertise and cultural knowledge throughout all stages of the initiative.

It was consistently reinforced that the term ‘education’ for remote Indigenous community members also encompasses the acquisition of Indigenous cultural knowledge that is obtained through a staged process to be able to progress in leadership and responsibility levels, similar to progression to gain Western qualifications. The WCE initiative placed high value on working together with Indigenous staff who ensured that local activities, approaches and outcomes were informed by Indigenous culture, education and worldviews.

There were advantages and disadvantages to working in this way. Although these principles are well supported in the literature, it is not possible to empirically highlight further the value of this approach within the WCE initiative in terms of impacts or outcomes using evaluation data due to challenges in the evaluation and implementation process that are described in this report. What was clear, though, was that:

- the diverse worldviews and perspectives added much value to the initiative as people involved learnt from each other in an iterative way. The importance of using a Both Ways approach was consistently highlighted by local community members as indispensable for local involvement and control and for development of mutual trust and respect;
- embracing Indigenous (intercultural10) communication processes - such as the use of cultural metaphors and storytelling - were an important part of working together, and communicating and negotiating shared meaning;

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10 Refer to page 39 for a more detailed discussion around ‘interculturality’.
• the strong commitment to community projects by community education leaders and Indigenous corporations and other stakeholders was seen to be due in part to this approach but also relates to the fact that this short-term initiative enabled some components of the long-term visions of some communities that were already clear to be progressed. This also, of course, reflects these leaders’ high level of commitment for education, leadership and advancement in their communities; and

• WCE activities that included, or focused on, integrating cultural considerations, practices and approaches were highly valued by Indigenous community members and led to ownership over processes and activities.

Recommendation 4: Value Indigenous cultures as a rich part of Australia’s heritage and identity, and as an essential element of establishment of local control and ownership.

Strong and trusting relationships that developed within the WCE team enabled rich engagement and consultation within the team and between and within the six partner communities. The relationship between Indigenous culture and identity and education pathways are complex but a general consensus appears to exist on the following statements:

• strong cultural knowledge and practices act as a foundation for succeeding in ‘Western’ forms of education;

• although Indigenous cultural knowledges took first priority, Indigenous community leaders passionately believe in the importance of Western education and that Indigenous and Western education practices are mutually supportive;

• community leaders are worried about the preservation of their languages and cultures into the future;

• community leaders have many different roles and identities, or ‘hats’ – they do not only identify as Indigenous; they are also community leaders, board members, school teachers, mothers, fathers, researchers etc.; and

• it is the ability to negotiate these different ‘hats’ that maximises an individual’s potential for success in life, being able to slip between different identities and worlds of meaning. (Aikman, 1997; Kymlicka, 2003; Ujitami & Volet, 2008). The WCE initiative refers to the complex intersection and overlap of cultures and identities as ‘interculturality’

WCE community based staff and other community leaders who have navigated the educational pathway, and who hold leadership positions in their community have lived experienced of the tensions and dilemmas of the intersection of mainstream and Indigenous cultures. In functioning within these varying cultures they have acquired confidence, skills and knowledge that allows them to operate and negotiate interculturality and to act as mentors and role-models within their community. They are able to ‘wear different hats’ and have expressed pride in academic achievement of themselves and their families.

‘We are proud of our achievements.’ WCE Community Researcher, Galiwin’ku.

Though there are challenges, those leaders employed within the WCE initiative did not view acquiring a mainstream education as being contrary to Indigenous cultural learning. They saw the immense difficulties to be surmounted for those who do have aspirations, with the system being described as ‘a jungle’. It was considered important to highlight that data obtained through the WCE initiative indicated that community leaders in partner communities do not see Western education as being assimilatory or harmful – but that it is inaccessible and at a distance.
Nakata (2013) reports that traditional discourse about Indigenous affairs fails ‘to engage with the complexity of the contemporary space in which we as Indigenous people find ourselves today’ (p.289). He states that ‘in the rush to overcome the domination of Western knowledge through restorations of Indigenous language, concepts and knowledge, the complexities of the historical and contemporary convergences between them are not examined in enough depth.’ He argues that resistance to the assimilatory tendencies of Australian education systems has led to rejection of Western knowledge, theory and practice, and expresses concern about this. Indigenous agency is being stripped from analysis in favour of Indigenous affirmation and assertions. Although Both Ways philosophy is a more commonly used concept within Indigenous settings, and is used for simplicity in this report, theory around the notion of interculturality was supported by WCE data. The broad range of projects developed though the WCE initiative saw positive engagement as they operated within an intercultural space and provided flexibility for local people to be able to move within these spaces as was necessary. Awareness of interculturality also assisted in team communication as it meant that the genuine tensions and dilemmas in communicating could be acknowledged and consciously negotiated.

Nakata’s Indigenous standpoint theory (2007) encourages Indigenous researchers to utilise their socio-cognitive interpretations of the world to identify beliefs and assumptions that are taken for granted by the wider society. The continual tensions that inform and limit what can and cannot be said every day forms part of this. Such tensions within this initiative included to some degree perceptions of non-Indigenous staff about the extent to which non-Indigenous members of the WCE team could or should provide input into consultation and decision-making. Having said this, however, the value and privilege of learning from senior Indigenous leaders in a team environment was generally thought of as the priority.

Practically, operating interculturally was potentially tiring for all staff, but in particular for Indigenous community-based staff. Functioning within unfamiliar environments – for example, the university – receiving large amounts of new information and vocabulary while speaking English as a second language necessitated a slow and patient process, which affected logistics and timeframes. This was combined with the regular requirements for travel, the logistics on arrival and poor health in a number of cases. They were challenges which had to be considered when for example, scheduling lead in times for travel and events, arranging agendas and workshop programs, planning activities and communicating with each other.

Operating interculturally was also challenging for campus-based staff – some more than others. Non-Indigenous campus-based staff were travelling back and forth regularly to remote Indigenous communities and working in environments that were not necessarily familiar to them. Operating in settings with such high levels of uncertainty and unpredictability, where day-to-day priorities of community-based colleagues sometimes varied from organisational priorities of the initiative, was not easy. These visits were also time-limited, which added a certain amount of pressure. Earlier suggestions about staff living or staying in communities for longer durations were not approved – mainly due to the cost factor, since accommodation costs in communities are extremely high. Longer stays – at least during the initial consultation and relationship develop process – could have relieved some of this pressure.

Even when campus based staff members had pre-existing relationships with the communities they were working with, there were constant challenges in ensuring that they were acting, speaking and working in a way that was considered appropriate by their community-based Indigenous colleagues. Indigenous community-based staff and community members consistently demonstrated patience and understanding for non-Indigenous members in their ongoing learning. This gradual process of getting to know each other and the joint learning process should not be undervalued and is an important element of working in partnership in this setting.
Working interculturally was perhaps even more complex for Indigenous campus-based staff who found themselves in a place where they were not necessarily part of the local community, but were obliged to adopt certain behaviours when working with Indigenous community-based staff. Open discussion was usually effective in resolving these difficulties.

‘With me being Aboriginal – part of our role was to make meaningful relationships in community so I do that, but then obligation comes with that and it’s something I can’t control, it just is. So now that I’m connected to [community-based WCE staff] in that way, there’s things I can’t do. If they say, ‘no’ I can’t do it. If they say, ‘Do this’ I have to do it, I can’t say, ‘No, I can’t do that’... Sometimes I try to go in the western way and do connections that they don’t approve of. They’re very good because I can tell they’re annoyed by it and they may verbalise that as well, but then we talk more and move on.’

- Indigenous campus-based WCE team member.

Other challenges associated with implementing the approach included the time that was required to ensure effective implementation in remote and very remote settings, from within a large organisation, with a restricted timeframe, with confident and experienced staff who had not worked with each other in the past and who came from very different backgrounds. Understandably there were differences in perspectives around how the initiative should best be implemented. It was highly challenging to negotiate these at both organisational and community levels and share them in a way which informed future direction and approach given the high levels of travel and the complexity of this environment.

**Recommendation 5:** Prioritise Indigenous voices in programming decisions, but encourage debate and critical thinking involving other experts and the literature.

**Recommendation 6:** Embed reflection about interculturality in internal evaluation and learning processes.

Local community leaders played lead roles in determining a number of features of each community project. At the whole of team level, Indigenous community-based staff were heavily involved in deciding reflection topics and leading group reflection activities. As much as was logistically possible, the perspectives of these leaders were included in WCE activities that occurred in urban centres, such as at conferences and high level meetings. This usually occurred through their physical presence at these events, however, on occasion video recordings were played to audiences when this was not possible.

The flexible approach to research and evaluation had some benefits for the program. There was strong involvement of community-based staff in the research and evaluation activities that were conducted in each community project, and as a result these projects and the resulting the recommendations regarding community perspectives about higher education are strongly grounded in the perspectives of remote Indigenous community leaders. This is an important outcome of the initiative as too often the voices of people in remote Indigenous communities are not heard in educational policies, policy discourses and programs. This also served to enable Both Ways capacity building; non-Indigenous people involved learnt about culturally relevant data collection tools and analysis methods, for example, and vice versa.

The collaborative process that was employed to develop the WCE Initiative Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines and the WCE Initiative Research and Evaluation Framework was valued by the team. It enabled the team to abide by the principles that were important to Indigenous staff, including inclusion of Indigenous perspectives throughout the process of project implementation. It also assisted in building team cohesion after a challenging start to the project.
It is to be noted that in attempting to combine developmental evaluation and participatory action research approaches together in this setting there were no guidelines to follow. Developmental evaluation itself is an emerging field of expertise, and the remote NT context is unique in many ways. It was unknown how this approach should be implemented as, to our knowledge in the NT, it had not been trialled before in such a large scale project. The WCE initiative gave it a try, and although the challenges were significant, there is learning to be gained.

For most of 2015, there was limited evaluative data collected or shared from WCE community projects amongst the WCE team to assist in project development. This was influenced by a combination of:

- unclear aims and scope of the project;
- insufficient evaluation staffing capacity to support the evaluation process and the time intensiveness of the approach;
- campus-based team members’ roles had been designated as ‘research active’;
- the ideological view of some campus-based staff members that protection of intellectual property of communities took priority over broader team goals; and
- the time required to design and establishing the WCE initiative in each community.

Feedback was provided by evaluation staff regarding the need to agree on a common approach to data collection and sharing, however, the flexible approach to participatory action research was supported by the rest of the team. Campus-based team members were encouraged by evaluation staff and the Program Manager numerous times to participate in the evaluation process, however, some campus based staff did not collect or share evaluative data. These considerations were particularly important for team reflection and development, the sharing of useful information with the Steering Group, and on final evaluation and reporting. Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) Initiative Community Evaluation Reports therefore have utilised varying amounts and quality of evaluative data.

The approaches taken to the participatory action research process, and therefore partly the solutions for implementing change, were at the discretion of the campus-based team members who worked with Indigenous community members and community-based staff to implement the projects in each community. Shortfalls in the design of research and evaluation systems and the issues described above impacted iteratively upon one another and thus they were not resolved; rather community level projects progressed with a diverse range of approaches and areas of focus.

Evaluations are essential to policy and service refinement, analysis of program impacts and outcomes, and sharing of learning amongst many other reasons. The Hudson report (2016) demonstrated that less than ten per cent of federal, state and territory and non-governmental or not for profit Indigenous-specific programs had been evaluated either during or after implementation. The report also highlighted that most Indigenous programs continue to ‘treat Indigenous people as a homogenous entity and do not take into account differing levels of need’ (p.2). The reality is that in order for programs, services and policy to be able to respond to the diverse needs of Indigenous communities and evaluate process and outcomes, time is required. Had the evaluation process functioned in a more effective way or had the project been implemented in a more ‘structured’ way, the timeframe of the project may still not have been adequate to enable tangible, evidence-based outcomes to emerge.

**Recommendation 7:** Agree to a common approach to research and evaluation, including data collection and dissemination systems. Ensure this is embedded from the outset and factored into the design of the project.
The environment in remote Indigenous communities is one in which things cannot be rushed. In the first instance, relationships and trust must exist for any program or research to work well. In remote communities, people are extremely busy and there are often many demands placed on local organisations and staff.

‘There’s Balanda [non-Indigenous people] coming in sometimes, ‘We’re here, we want to call a meeting.’ Sometimes I don’t have enough time because I have so many demands from the government, and from those kinds of people, you see.’

- WCE Community Researcher, Yirrkala.

At the local organisational level, multiple things are often juggled at one time including delivery of core programs and services, hosting visitors, running events, supporting or participating in other community programs and events, in addition to other every day duties involved in running an organisation. Emotional or stressful events have widespread consequences and it is critical to respect the grief that these events cause, and the necessary cultural obligations and healing process. The initiative had to be respectful and supportive of such features of the environment.

‘For the research [during Cyclone Lam, February 2015]... how can you interview me if I’m not ready, if my backyard is still dirty and I’m packing all my clothes, packing all my blankets and sheets to move to a demountable or moving to the tents. We had to move all of them to the oval. People weren’t ready for that. Children were all over the place. The children didn’t go to school. People were worrying for their house, they were stressed and in pain at that time.’

- WCE Initiative Community Researcher, Galiwinku.

Recommendation 8: Factor timeframes and the socio-political, cultural and environmental context into determining program goals.
**Social Network Analysis (SNA)**

The SNA diagrams were utilised in various ways in each community project, with five of the six communities collecting SNA data that was intended to guide engagement processes. The diagrams produced demonstrated in a quantitative manner the ‘amount’ of engagement that had progressively occurred along the lifespan of projects. This was a way of representing the significant investment that was placed in engaging with broad community networks. The data also provides a picture of the expansiveness of the networks developed; by March 2016, which was the last point of data collection, up to 38 different organisations had been engaged with in each community.

The Yuendumu SNA process was unique in that it mapped leadership positions held by Yuendumu community leaders. The diagrams demonstrated that although several community leaders are represented on local Boards in a voluntary capacity, senior and middle management positions in the community are almost entirely held by non-Indigenous people. This highlighted the need for supported career pathways into these roles for local Indigenous community members. This data was fed back to community organisations, with one organisation then leading a discussion with its board members to employ and mentor a Warlpiri [local Indigenous] person in a senior role.

Tennant Creek community-based staff showed a particular amount of interest in the SNA process and requested that the diagrams be rearranged to be able to analyse engagement across different ‘sectors’ in the community, such as Aboriginal Corporations, research and education organisations, and government bodies. This highlighted to WCE staff working in Tennant Creek that up until that point in time the consultation process had engaged a wide range of stakeholders.

While definitions of terms such as ‘engagement’, an ‘individual’, and an ‘organisation’ were defined during the team SNA workshop in October 2014, it appears that the definitions in SNA data collection may not have been as clear cut as was thought. Despite providing preparatory training and support for staff, there were some difficulties experienced in the data collection process that led to inconsistency in the data recorded.

It is to be noted that SNA data was only collected and included in the SNA process for engagements that occurred when campus-based staff were present in community. This means that many formal and informal interactions throughout the project of community-based staff with stakeholders in their home communities were not captured. The data would have been significantly different if these interactions had also been mapped.

SNA data sometimes was not integrated into Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) Initiative Community Evaluation Reports. This is in part due to staff turnover through the course of the initiative, time pressures and the significant workload of team members.

SNA is a useful process for providing quantitative information about networks and engagement, however, requires significant time and effort to ensure consistency in definitions, process, method and recording so that it can be implemented and integrated into overall work in a meaningful and systematic way.
Figure 6: Yuendumu SNA diagram depicting Indigenous community leaders (blue circles) that are represented on three or more Boards of community organisations (pink circles).

Figure 7: Gunbalanya SNA diagram depicting engagement of WCE staff (centre blue circle) with individuals (orange circles) in community organisations (blue circles). Diagram includes data collected until March 2016.
Process: Governance and partnerships

Some positive features of the governance process (ie. the Steering Group) were reported, including that the perspectives of community representatives were highly valued at these meetings, and that community representatives felt empowered in having the opportunity to share their points of view directly with high level staff members in represented institutions.

‘For me, to be able to see that presence, it made me so proud, having such strong visions for our own people. We live in that community, and we will die there. We have our families there and we want the young ones to follow our steps.’

WCE Steering Group community representative.

‘There wasn’t a person around the table who was going to interrupt when the community elders wanted to say something and they did, they took advantage of that and they brought it right back to the pragmatic realities that they’re facing on the ground. I think it was extremely important for the Steering Group to bear witness to that and to learn from that.’

Non-Indigenous WCE Steering Group member.

In terms of the role of the Steering Group, the Steering Group’s function in supporting institutional change within represented organisations was hindered because of several intermingling factors:

Internal factors (arising from processes relating to WCE implementation)

• Varying interpretations of WCE aims, objectives and scope.
• Team members and Steering Group members had differing perceptions regarding the role of the Steering Group, which related to these differing perceptions of aims and objectives of the initiative.
• WCE team members were sometimes confused about, or resistant to, sharing information relating to planning and evaluation; some staff did not produce community action plans when requested, and shared limited amounts of evaluative data.
• When team members did share data it was not consistent across the collective WCE team because of the varied aims, objectives and approaches encompassed within each community.
• There was less regular communication between the Steering Group and the WCE team than what was requested by team members.
• The broad scope of the initiative meant there were many different activity areas occurring at once; meetings were reported by some Steering Group members to be a one-way transfer of information rather than an opportunity to discuss opportunities for system improvements.
• Challenges in the developmental evaluation process led to disparities in the information that the Steering Group could have utilised in a productive way (evaluative data) and what was actually reported (description of activities).
External factors (arising from the Steering Group or the environment)

- All Steering Group members valued the presence and input of remote Indigenous community representatives but it was questioned whether the involvement of team members in the project may have been a conflict of interest.
- There was questioning about the NT DoE’s commitment to the project due to the level of seniority of the DoE representative of the group and a recurring change of membership.
- Individual representatives were often busy people and sometimes did not attend meetings regularly.
- Several political considerations were in place relating to institutional histories, agreements and circumstances; such as an historically competitive relationship between BIITE and CDU, and the rollout of the NT DoE’s Indigenous Education Strategy.

**Recommendation 9:** Agree on a clear purpose for governance structures. Align this with aims and objectives.

**Recommendation 10:** Prioritise purposeful, transparent and timely governance communication.

**Recommendation 11:** Do groundwork in establishing partnerships and pay attention to ongoing communication.

**Process: Implementation**

The relationship building process, as already mentioned, was imperative to establishing a new initiative such as this. Relationships and trust are known to be precursors of a strong consultative process, particularly in a remote Indigenous community context, and these also take time to develop (Hunt, 2013). The WCE initiative invested significantly in establishing and maintaining relationships and trust in the community setting.

‘We just don’t walk in and say, ‘Excuse me, come here, I want to talk to you,’ that’s you making a person a bit frightened you know, you’ve got to stand back a bit. If you’re going with your manners and approach him and want to talk to him, you want to have a good yarn with him, to sit down and give you his story, he will relax, he knows. He knows that you want to have a good conversation with him and he wants to hear your stories, where you’re coming from and all that.’

- WCE Community Researcher, Kabulwarnamu.

Consultation processes in WCE partner communities were led by local Indigenous community members and Indigenous community-based staff, once they were employed. These individuals have extensive knowledge about cultural, social and historical features of the community context. Only those that have lived the reality of life in their community understand best how to negotiate it. Finally, and most importantly, the initiative was premised on the belief that Indigenous people can and will, take on responsibility for what happens in their communities and assume control when they are given the space to do so.
With pre-existing relationships and local knowledge of community-based staff leading the process, the consultation process looked different in each community. Some common success factors in this process included the following:

- not rushing the process
- understanding that people often have many other socio-political, cultural, familial and organisational responsibilities
- understanding that sometimes it is not the right time to talk about certain things
- being aware of body language, gender sensitivities, language considerations and other cultural norms
- non-Indigenous staff endeavouring to learn about the kinship system
- listening respectfully and graciously when Indigenous knowledge is shared
- getting to know people personally where there were not pre-existing relationships
- treating everyone as equals, appreciating differences and being respectful
- participating in or supporting other activities or events that may not be part of core business
- engaging in humour
- regularly reflecting on the successes and challenges in the process, and agreeing to solutions for improvement

The timeframe for implementation placed pressure on all staff throughout the development and implementation of the initiative. Immense frustration with constantly changing government policies was often palpable, and at times it was important to provide time and space to air this frustration. The 2007 Northern Territory Emergency Response, also known as ‘the Intervention’, was mentioned numerous times as having done damage to communities. Historical events such as this have cumulatively eroded trust in outsiders and as a result time to build this trust is lengthy and requires patience.

“We’ve gone round and round. We’re not going anywhere. It’s frustrating our people. They’re controlling people, pushing people down, not giving us any powers, not recognising our rights.’

- WCE Community Researcher, Tennant Creek.

**Recommendation 12:** Invest in the consultation and relationship development process, and systematise reflective learning within this.

The WCE initiative invested in group reflection sessions to help develop shared understandings about key concepts and terminology, roles, responsibilities and WCE aims in the establishment phase and later about important updates and team progress. Thrice annual whole of team workshops were a valued space to discuss and learn about, sometimes implicitly and sometimes explicitly, such things. Communication within teams working in each community was generally open, honest and transparent.

WCE team meeting agendas were relatively flexible, and meetings facilitated in a way that was inclusive of, and valued differing perspectives. Time was given to the exploration of histories, experiences, beliefs and metaphors. There was also priority placed on seeing some of the positive examples of work happening on site in communities; the WCE team had the chance to meet with a range of key local stakeholders in Tennant Creek and Maningrida. Community-based staff said they highly valued the opportunities to see
ways in which local organisations are supporting educational pathways of people in other communities. Strong team relationships were also developed in part due to these workshops.

‘I’ve been working here for 20 years, and I have found something new like my family now. You’re family in this group and I am very pleased you know, I feel safe.’

- WCE Community Researcher, Yirrkala.

It is essential to continually reflect on the role of linguistic, historical, political, intercultural and geographical factors on communication. Some of the considerations in communicating effectively in this context that have been described include differing modes of discourse and worldviews, the dominance of Western-centric service models, cultural and linguistic distance and staff cross-cultural competencies (Cass et al., 2002). Within the WCE team alone, more than twenty-seven languages were spoken collectively. Email is not the preferred method of communication for people in remote communities, often due to a combination of English and computer literacy challenges, however oral communication was often not always possible. Effort was made to overcome some of the challenges brought about by distance through provision of laptops, iPads, mobile phones and dongles to many staff. Of course, human errors were sometimes made and correspondence was sometimes forgotten. Some efforts were made to develop digital literacy with community-based staff by the WCE Coordinator and Community Teachers’ Liaison Leader, however, other tasks were seen as higher priorities by the CELs and/or MEOs, who were often the key point of contact for community projects.

There was, on the odd occasion, evidence of intercultural miscommunication between non-Indigenous staff and Indigenous staff or community members. To some degree, miscommunication between non-Indigenous, and even amongst Indigenous people, with local Indigenous community members is unavoidable and measures must be put in place that enable ongoing learning about, and resolution, of such challenges (Cass et al., 2002; Cunningham, 2003; Eades, 1991; Royal, 2003).

**Recommendation 13:** Prioritise reflection on communication processes in program evaluation systems and processes.

**Recommendation 14:** Maximise digital literacy skills development, where required, as a means to assist with communication across geographic boundaries and for broader staff benefit.

The pressure to publish in the academic context has been well documented (Adam & Knight, 2002; Angell, 1986; De Rond & Miller, 2005; Devlin, 2016; Foster, Rzhetsky, & Evans, 2015; M. Larkin, 1999; Lee, 2014; Sarewitz, 2016; Vale & Karataglidis, 2016; van Dalen & Henkens, 2012). That the initiative was positioned within an academic setting, in combination with the designation of program staff positions as research active roles caused some tendency of activities to be focused on research focused tasks rather than action. There existed some lack of clarity around what constituted ‘core’ project work and the way in which related ‘research heavy’ tasks fit within the project scope. There were perceptions within the team that research activity within the initiative impeded progress to some degree.
It was unforeseen that some components within organisational systems, policies and administration support would be such a challenge to navigate. To illustrate this, some examples of the tasks that, in other contexts may not be such an issue to resolve, are highlighted below:

• The procurement process required a Certificate of Exemption to procure services if the intended service provider was a sole provider in that remote community. This sometimes took several months to obtain, which in the span of two and a half years was a significant period of time.

• Support offered by staff management systems for mediating staff management issues was less than ideal, and policies were vague and open to individual interpretation.

• Policies for some finance and administration processes were unclear and poorly suited for work in remote Indigenous communities, and there were no clear guidelines to direct what to do if there were perceived policy breaches.

• There was a systemic organisational miscommunication of finance and human resourcing systems that led to confusion around monitoring of expenditure. Much time, sometimes hours or days at a time, was spent communicating between different areas within CDU to resolve these issues.

• There was a significant administrative burden, particularly for staff travel arrangements which included paper based movement requisitions and cumbersome booking processes through the corporate travel agency, that lacked flexibility and were poorly designed to cater for the needs of remote travel.

Factors such as those above added significant burden to the workload of the WCE Program Manager and WCE Coordinator. There was a swift response to realisation that support in this area had to be increased for WCE initiative to be able to operate effectively. It is crucial, however, that the supporting organisational environment be assessed when designing programs.

Process: Dissemination

The effectiveness of the dissemination process for collective findings was limited by the approach taken, implementation challenges and the timeframe. Multiple presentations were co-created and co-presented with community-based and campus-based staff at a number of conferences and forums. However, the extent to which collective findings could be used to inform opportunities for systems-level change was generally limited.
5. Achievements of the WCE initiative

This chapter includes a brief summary of achievements of the WCE initiative. Evaluative data to inform this chapter includes team meeting and workshop notes and observations, community- and campus-based staff interviews, Steering Group representative interviews and community stakeholder interviews.

The achievements and developments described in this chapter and in Chapter 6 should also be considered in the context of working in partnership. It is important to acknowledge that much work was already occurring within partner organisations. In some cases, the WCE initiative provided facilitation or support for processes or actions that were already underway. It is also important to acknowledge that for many of the developments described below other programs or work has been occurring simultaneously, for example, the NT DoE Indigenous Education Strategy. It is emphasised that what is reported below is the result of work of a wide range of people who were involved in WCE activities – whether that be community members, employees in communities, members of the WCE team, key partner representatives and a broader network of actors.

Relationship development

A number of mutually beneficial relationships were formed or strengthened through the WCE initiative. New relationships formed included those between community education leaders and high level staff in partner organisations. This occurred predominantly through regular Steering Group meetings but also through activities such as remote graduation ceremonies, workshops, conferences and a Joint Remote Schools Council Gathering. Six Indigenous community education leaders that were employed through the initiative were awarded honorary appointments by CDU, a process supported considerably by the initiative. Several staff members at CDU have also formed relationships with these community leaders and continue to collaborate in various research initiatives.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Galiwin’ku research organisation Yalu Marrgithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation, CDU and Menzies. The WCE initiative supported the negotiation process and an event to mark its establishment. This was attended in person by several high-level staff at CDU, including the former Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership, Professor Steven Larkin. These relationships have developed communication channels between urban based stakeholders and leaders in remote communities that will support ongoing strategy and project development, research and collaboration.

Interview data indicated that some pre-existing relationships between stakeholders in communities had been made stronger since the WCE initiative began. This is particularly important in this context; the siloed approach that government departments and organisations working in the community often take, for various reasons, was highlighted as a barrier to cross-sectoral collaboration in the research and education sector by many members of partner WCE communities. Relationships were reported to have strengthened between the school and community members in Alekerange and Yirrkala; the school and the Mediation Centre in Yuendumu; and the school and Yalu Marrgithinyaraw in Galiwin’ku.

It was reported that relationships were developed between community members and members of some represented organisations on the Steering Group. NAILSMA’s Certificate III in Indigenous Land and Sea Management, which they had piloted as part of their agreement with the WCE initiative, was put on scope for delivery by BIITE as a result of relationships developed through the Steering Group. This was viewed as a positive outcome by both parties.
Contributions to the evidence base

The WCE initiative has made a strong contribution to the Indigenous higher education sector through its approach to research in remote Indigenous communities. The perspectives about higher education of people in these communities in the NT have been encompassed within the recommendations contained in this report, within the six Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) Initiative Evaluation Reports, and within other documentation produced – such as the Collective School Council Statement on Remote Indigenous Education (available at https://remotengagetoeedu.com.au/projects/joint-remote-indigenous-school-council-gathering/). This is an achievement within the context of educational policy and policy development and the evidence base generated can be utilised by a range of decision-makers within the setting to inform future policy reform and development.
6. Emerging developments

This chapter includes a brief summary of developments that began to emerge in the later stages of the WCE initiative in 2016. Data that was used to inform this section includes a selection of the various data sources listed on page 38. Due the challenges that have been explained, there were limitations in the amount and type of evaluation data that was collected to demonstrate the impact to date of these ‘developments’. The information reported here should therefore be interpreted with caution.

This chapter will categorise developments supported by the WCE initiative by those that occurred in:

- partner communities; and
- at the ‘systems’ level.

Community level initiatives

The initiatives undertaken in communities were developed in response to identified priorities in each community. They are consistent with strategies to improve remote community educational outcomes that have been described in the literature (for example, Guenther, Osborne, Disbray & Bat, 2016). Some of these will require further funding to continue to progress.

Community disposition towards higher education

The WCE initiative was requested to report on ‘community disposition towards higher education’ as a key performance indicator. It proved to be extremely challenging to measure this, and to be able to demonstrate change, given the qualitative nature of appropriate data and the timeframe of this initiative. The following observations have been made relating to the WCE team’s interpretation of indications that community disposition towards higher education has been influenced through the WCE initiative.

Increased awareness about higher education pathways was reported by stakeholders in Tennant Creek, Yirrkala and Maningrida. While there is some ongoing remote delivery of further education services, predominantly VET courses, resourcing is generally steadily declining in the sector. Over time this has caused the physical accessibility of further education to significantly reduce. It was reported that CDU and BIITE do not have a strong presence in remote communities because of this. The informational support that was offered to community members in these communities about available study options, study support, and how to go about enrolment, for example, appeared to be a valued opportunity for community members to learn about how they could realise their aspirations.

Some stakeholders commented on the importance of the remote Indigenous education leaders demonstrating to other community members role modelling their success in education and employment.

There is evidence to suggest that some community-based researchers involved in the WCE initiative learnt about pathways into higher education, study options and available support. One community-based WCE researcher highlighted that community members saw him as a champion for higher education in his community:
‘When we talk to people in a group discussion, they think over the conversation we’ve had where we try to talk about it [higher education], sharing the ideas with those people. Later on, they won’t talk to you immediately, but now they know you, that you are there in that specific job about higher education. So by the next time, people sort of come forward and ask you a question. How can I get myself in there? How can I now get support to go to uni? Who can I talk to? So there are people - they’re listening and they’re watching. And then the next visit, people will start to approach in their own ways and start talking to you. So that’s a great achievement.’

- WCE Initiative Community Researcher, Gunbalanya.

The data highlights that for some of the community-based staff who were employed through the WCE initiative, their motivations to continue advocating for higher education and research have increased. Again, it would be imprudent to claim that the WCE initiative is responsible for this. These are highly committed and passionate individuals who have been working in the education setting for a long time. Nevertheless, they were provided with up to date information and increased access to resources and expertise during their employment with the WCE initiative. There are indications, that the conversations and learning that occurred during WCE implementation stimulated some individuals to pursue their own educational goals. Two community-based team members enrolled in Master’s degree courses, and another applied for a fellowship to conduct research into community-based Indigenous higher education.

‘I can recall before WCE, we’ve never really come around the table, we weren’t taken seriously and for me, I see that our people in the community that are leaders of our organisations and people that are highly regarded in our community, see that Indigenous education is an important area for us to come together, it makes us want to come together, it makes us want to work together and find a way forward together. That’s one thing that really stands out for me, is that ‘wanting’ to come together, ‘wanting’ to see action.’

- WCE Community Researcher, Tennant Creek.

The WCE initiative organised or supported many aspiration building activities including graduation celebrations [4], careers expos [8], student pathway visits to Darwin [3], human rights training [2 students] and a number of career pathway mentoring activities. Significant interest and engagement observed in these activities in addition to some observations by community stakeholders of their increasing confidence, however, are a marker that these events were part of the overall picture of building knowledge about, and confidence to aspire to, higher education. Several students who participated in WCE aspiration building activities have gone on to completion of VET studies or employment, although of course the WCE initiative is one part of this picture.

Interagency workshops delivered at Maningrida and Gunbalanya resulted in discussions around research protocols and the development of Community Action Plans that encompassed self-identified opportunities to support students and potential students engage in further education in their communities. Upon cessation of the initiative, some stakeholders in Gunbalanya reported that they felt motivated to follow through with the actions in this Action Plan to help support student study aspirations.

‘This has already opened up broader discussions about communication and decision-making processes within my team and is something that we have been able to begin feeding back to the higher education institutions conducting research with our team.’

- WCE Interagency Workshop participant, Gunbalanya.
Upon cessation of operational funding, all communities that partnered with WCE had expressed increasing interest in extending local implementation of WCE activities. Even though WCE implementation in each community looked quite different, WCE community leaders were keen to continue the work that they had developed in their communities.

‘Last week we did a proposal to continue the Raypirri [Both Ways mentoring] work. There is a lot of involvement from different community organisations. CDEP supervising the workers – they are involved; Night Patrol; Yalu; Marthakal Homelands; where can we take the children for this discipline. From the start – it’s growing bigger – from the small mentoring program, it’s going out in to the community. WCE planted the seed. This is the outcome.’

- WCE Community Researcher, Galiwin’ku.

‘I’d like to stay [with WCE] a few more years to really, really build the communities aspirations about education pathways. Get all of the organisations, government service providers, Indigenous organisations and Education Departments working together. If things are working properly in the community and people are really, really working together, it would be so different.’

- WCE Community Researcher, Gunbalanya and Maningrida.

‘We come here to see that we can come together strong. We come here to see what strength we can muster from everybody, all the organisations who talk about Indigenous education in Tennant. I said, ‘Why can’t we be leading the way in Tennant Creek? Let’s keep going from here on. Why don’t we do our own?’

- WCE Community Researcher, Tennant Creek.

‘The fishtrap metaphor is something within Yolngu culture that inspires us on our education pathways. We have that foundation, but we have a problem with ongoing funding. There are a lot of things that need to be done. We want to continue working with everyone in community – especially the young school leavers. We’ve been doing a lot of mentoring and school leadership. We need to keep building that understanding.’

- WCE Community Researcher, Yirrkala.

‘We started things up with the WCE initiative and now it’s really working very well in the community with the school and the other organisations, and we will continue ourselves - because of WCE it was possible. We want to continue the work ourselves in the community.’

- WCE Community Researcher, Yuendumu.
Impetus for existing community initiatives

For some communities, the WCE initiative was a valued opportunity to progress work that was part of pre-existing community aspirations. Community leaders in Yirrkala and Yuendumu, for example, have historically been strong advocates in the education space and utilised support provided by the WCE initiative to build on initiatives that had been developed over decades of work. School staff in Tennant Creek and Yirrkala reported that the WCE initiative provided a means for stimulating conversations that were already of interest in relation to education in the community.

‘We have been able to do things here in the school that we weren’t normally able to do – having workshops, forums and meetings that wouldn’t normally happen… They may have been things that we would have done – but having [the WCE initiative] involved it made us do them and really kicked things along.’

- Yirrkala Homelands School Principal.

‘Everything’s not going to happen overnight but those discussions help to move it along and do help in working towards something bigger.’

- Tennant Creek High School Teacher.

Similarly, Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw Aboriginal Corporation in Galiwin’ku has been heavily involved in numerous health and education research projects and they harnessed WCE funding and support to, amongst a number of other things, build the confidence and capacity of local Indigenous staff members.

‘Before, they were relying on me or on the Assistant Manager, or to other people who are Balanda [non-Indigenous] to do their planning to help them. But when WCE program came in, and when we employed the Skills Development Officer, [he] works to help and support the team of Yalu’ here. Now as you can see, they can do their own database recording, their own planning, even do their own programming, and typing reports.’

- Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw Manager, Galiwin’ku.

Mentoring and youth leadership

Several projects aimed at providing academic, leadership, and social and emotional support for students were implemented through the WCE initiative. The remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit was attended by more than thirty youth from around the NT and northern Western Australia. Participants commented that it was helpful for them to hear ideas from, and be inspired by, young leaders in other communities. There was excellent engagement by most participants in the activities that aimed to help them identify leadership qualities, identify their own areas of strength, and instil confidence in themselves to become future leaders of their communities.

Programs directly targeting school students were established in Yuendumu and Galiwin’ku. The Community School Safety Program in Yuendumu saw a number of conflicts successfully resolved through mediation, support and counselling.

‘Of the 35 youth offenders we have engaged with, only 3 have since re-offended.’

- Yuendumu Mediation Centre staff member.
Establishment of the mentoring program in Galiwin’ku was delayed and subsequently began with insufficient planning. The time factor, of course, was an important reason for this. During its operation, students were highly engaged in learning activities, however, the frequency of classes slowed down before the end of 2016.

Intensive mentoring activities occurred with several young people in Tennant Creek. As a result of this, mentored youth were able to complete Indigenous Human Rights professional learning courses, apply for a driver’s license, and in one case become employed at the local school.

‘[He] went a long way. Especially as a male person, you know. You don’t see very many local men from here do training like [he] did… I believe if it wasn’t for the mentoring that he received, he could have been just another one fell off the rails.’
- Tennant Creek Elder.

**Cultural safety within schools**

School staff in Tennant Creek High School, Alekerange and Galiwin’ku were confident that the WCE initiative had assisted to accelerate reform of education delivery in their community to include an increased focus on Indigenous perspectives. They believed that this helped new staff in particular to be better prepared to work with students and people in the communities. The Alekerange School Principal reported that the reflective process facilitated by WCE staff assisted teaching staff to identify priority areas for their own professional development to be able to support the use of Indigenous metaphors in the classroom.

Cultural awareness training for school staff in Galiwin’ku, according to a senior staff member, was part of a change in culture within the school that included a shift in expectations around how staff should be working together.

‘The Yolŋu voice has increased in the classroom, the teachers are more across why it’s important for children to understand their place in the classroom and their place in the community and their responsibilities and roles and so forth… I’m confident that what has been established now in the school will continue and a lot of that will continue through the Learning on Country project.’
- Senior staff member, Shepherdson College, Galiwin’ku.

‘[The WCE initiative] has made me think more broadly about the purpose of my teaching and who I am as a non-indigenous Australian and how I can promote reconciliation from within a classroom and within a school setting more broadly.’
- Tennant Creek High School Teacher.

‘The WCE has brought in an Aboriginal perspective which overlays and it should be part and parcel of the future delivery of education across the Territory, especially where you’ve got English as the second and third, fourth language. It’s also where you’ve got culture that drives individual and that identity type of things.’
- Tennant Creek Primary School Teacher.
Language and cultural knowledge resources

The development of language resources were valued by school staff in Yirrkala. They will be available to use in the future to support the protection of local language and culture. This was consistently put forward as a community priority and is consistent with perspectives put forward across all partner WCE communities regarding the need for local languages and culture to be an ongoing part of education and teaching.

“We now have three literacy production workers with the skills to produce the iBooks and explore the international market.’

- Yirrkala School Teacher.

The WCE initiative provided funding to the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) to identify opportunities for remote Indigenous students and adult learners to participate in higher education, specifically relating to land and sea management. NAILSMA’s work resulted in a number of project successes. These include contextualisation of the teaching and learning content of a Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management, which is now on scope for delivery by BIITE as a result of pilot projects in Maningrida and Yirrkala, development of and training for iTracker applications to support literacy skill development and learning, and production of linguistically and culturally relevant training and learning resources such as books and posters. NAILSMA’s work has also seen numerous other successes described in their reports, which are available at:


The Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL) at CDU was funded through the WCE initiative to develop a suite of culturally appropriate training units relevant to Indigenous environmental management. The units take a transformational education approach and rely on the knowledge and expertise of local people to deliver aspects of the training. Course content for twelve North Australian Fire and Emergency Management units were developed, and the final report mapped potential VET qualifications within which these units may be accredited.

Indigenous research capacity

It was viewed as important for people in remote communities to have control over research. In 2015, the WCE initiative organised the Remote Indigenous Researchers Forum. This was attended by 22 remote Indigenous researchers from around the NT. The group expressed a passion for establishing an ongoing network of Indigenous researchers that could be drawn upon for their expertise, thus it was decided that Research ‘Us’ would be established. Research ‘Us’ became an incorporated organisation and was signatory to an MoU with CDU that suggested agreement to ongoing support by the institution. Unfortunately at the time of cessation of operational funding for the WCE initiative, activity from within Research ‘Us’ had slowed down as members were experiencing difficulties getting in touch with each other without the support of the Project Coordinator. Some smaller groups of individuals who were members of Research ‘Us’ have now gone on to develop their own independent Indigenous research groups.

Capacity for ongoing, locally led research was developed in Yuendumu. A Warlpiri Research Centre has been established to design and conduct Indigenous research projects, and for the digitisation and repatriation of archival research material. The WCE initiative provided support for equipping the renovation of this space. A significant amount of Warlpiri research material has already been repatriated and digitised through the Warlpiri Research Centre; Granites Mines Affected Area Aboriginal Corporation (GMAAAC) also contributed funds for this project.
Community governance and inter-organisational collaboration

Significant efforts were made in some communities to address weaknesses in community educational governance and inter-organisational collaboration. Yuendumu, Tennant Creek, Maningrida and Gunbalanya projects in particular spent lengthy periods of time consulting with individuals across different sectors in attempts to improve communication between organisations. The goal was to achieve consensus about how these organisations could best work in harmony to support education and further education needs of people in the community. Multiple stakeholders from across Maningrida and Gunbalanya, in particular, developed community specific action plans with identified opportunities for collaboration, such as supporting work experience students and conducting workplace skillset reviews. Tennant Creek has been a site of inter-organisational conflict for a number of years; some progress was made in smoothing historically tumultuous relationships. These relationships, however, are highly complex and difficult to influence.

‘... Community networks of family authority and responsibility have been strengthened and made more harmonious through inter-agency collaboration.’

- Yuendumu Mediation Centre staff member.

A number of positive developments were seen in relation to school governance in Yuendumu and Tennant Creek. In Tennant Creek, representation of local Indigenous community members on school councils increased by 10% at the primary school and by 20% at the high school. There is still room to improve the degree of genuine participation of these members in decision making; although this was a step forward, one member reported feeling intimidated and somewhat unsupported during meetings.

Yuendumu School Council achieved a full complement of members in 2016, representative of every different family group in Yuendumu. For a number of years, meetings had not been achieving quorum and the school’s constitution was outdated. The WCE initiative supported a collaboration between Yuendumu School and the PaCE project, auspiced by the Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC), to update the school council constitution to meet current standards. The WCE initiative and the Yuendumu School also developed a submission for the review of the Education Act (NT), facilitated by the Council of Government School Organisations (COGSO), regarding its use of the term ‘parent’. Legislation was passed successfully in which the definition of ‘parent’ was changed to recognise Indigenous customary law and tradition in relation to responsibility of a child, and this is now reflected in the language used in COGSO publications.

Indigenous leadership

Leadership capacity of the Indigenous community education leaders employed through, and involved with, the WCE initiative were supported throughout the implementation of the WCE. Of course, these leaders were already leaders for a reason; they are highly esteemed individuals who have extensive experience in education, health, governance, research, advocacy and many other fields. Their involvement in WCE, though, provided them with a platform to have their voice heard in a range of forums.
**Systems level initiatives**

The limited success in system level change that the WCE initiative contributed to partly reflects challenges experienced in the implementation process, the complexity of these systems, and to some extent the lack of clarity regarding the function of WCE key strategic partnerships. It also partly reflects the difficulties associated with achieving significant structural change at this level within such a short timeframe. Finally, the contextual challenges described in Chapter 2 are also factors. Nevertheless, some advances were made.

**Resources to inform research with remote Indigenous communities**

The revision of consent forms and information sheets during early consultation stages in Galiwin’ku and Yirrkala are displayed on the CDU website and are an example of culturally and linguistically appropriate consent process. See:

https://www.cdu.edu.au/research/ori/exemplar-cdu-research-project

WCE also provided support for the development of the online Indigenous research resource centre, found at:

http://www.cdu.edu.au/indigenous-leadership/ripci

These resources are aimed at researchers, academic supervisors, and graduate students who are researching in Indigenous spaces, topics, or communities. They explore the issues, challenges, and adaptations needed to make research practice ethical and culturally relevant.
The Strategic Priority Project (SPP) on adult English language, literacy and numeracy

Significant research and consultation for this project occurred with a broad range of stakeholders including subject specialists, high level CDU staff, Senior Indigenous leaders, Australian and NT Government staff, peak bodies, NGO staff and WCE Steering Group. The type and extent of input depended on the activities which were underway at the time. From January to July 2017 the primary focus of this SPP was within CDU itself – undertaking interviews, considering what was available for Indigenous adults wishing to improve their English LLN, how the ‘system’ worked. A workshop held in July 2016, attended by 33 University staff, provided an opportunity to discuss English LLN provision within the University, to network and explore current LLN-related English LLN enablers and barriers.

The SPP engendered broad based support within CDU. A small consultative group composed of specialist LLN practitioners and University staff/management informed the action and strategy of the SPP throughout its operation. The group has been strongly supported by Indigenous Elders from some of the WCE communities. These individuals attended workshops and meetings, provided video footage and been available to guide the process and the SPP manager – adding their perspectives and strength. The work of this group was supplemented by working groups on an ‘as needed’ basis.

This consultative group ensured that the presence of specialist knowledge and NT relevant experience and academic understanding and increased potential for strategic internal information sharing within the University; organisational learning and sustainable systems/service improvement; and provision of information on findings for use in strategic and operational plans within the University where required.

The direction of the SPP started to shift after the July workshop from initial CDU focus to an NT–wide collective focus. This shift was a response to low levels of participation in higher education and VET and indications that this was partly related to: a) low levels of English LLN; b) identification of the need for coordinated action around Indigenous adult English LLN; c) deficits in adult education policy and programs in the NT; d) the extent of need identified through interview; e) community conversations and desktop research; and f) stakeholder willingness to participate in collective processes.

The SPP was now aimed at building momentum for system-wide strategic change in the NT through increased engagement around LLN within university, government, non-government, business, industry and RTO sectors. Given the short-time frame it was not intended that NT–wide change would be achieved, but that change would be catalysed, interest increased, and stakeholder willingness to share expertise and resources would be demonstrated, acknowledged and documented.
In November 2016 eighty one individuals (36% Indigenous) from twenty-eight organisations and agencies attended a LLN workshop at Charles Darwin University (CDU) as part of the 2016 Indigenous Leaders conference. The approximately 80 attendees at this workshop agreed to be part of a network, which has subsequently increased to over 100 organisations and individuals. The basic elements of a consensus statement, ‘The Action Statement on Indigenous Adult English LLN in the NT’, were agreed upon and the Statement was released in April 2017. Attendees also expressed interest in attending the 2017 ACAL Conference, which will be held in Darwin in September 2017. Another symposium, post closure of the WCE was being arranged for the 12th September, 2017 at the time of writing – organised by the SPP Manager and the A/Director of the office of Learning and Teaching at CDU.

The SPP identified that there is no comprehensive source of adult LLN data for the Indigenous population of NT. Other jurisdictions use results from the 2011/12 Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) survey to understand adult literacy and numeracy competency for their population. The PIAAC survey in the NT, however, did not sample people in very remote Australia, and did not cover populations living in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This significantly impacts the utility of the data for the NT and disproportionately affects data for the Indigenous population in the NT. The implications of this deficit for policy development and socio-economic research are broad. Therefore the SPP has employed a statistician to produce a report on English LLN in the NT between June and August 2017. This statistical analysis incorporates analysis of Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) data from a range of providers. The simple-English, pictorial report will be presented at the September 2017 workshop, and will be available for use within the University to support the Post Graduate Diploma on Applied Language Literacy and Numeracy Skills Development and other presentations to organisations, agencies and indigenous boards.

In addition to the workshops, research contributions have been made to journal articles, conference and seminar presentations, a conference panel discussion, a strategic research framework developed by the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE), and strategic planning consultations within CDU. Literature reviews and archiving of research material for each strategic priority project are near completion and will be available for future use of this LLN Network and abroad. A range of case studies have been prepared and more were in preparation at time of writing. Video footage of interviews on LLN have also been edited and supported conference and workshop presentations.

A number of attempts to secure further funding to continue the Strategic Priority Projects have been made, but have been unsuccessful to date. A further submission will be made to the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Department of Education and Training before closure of the project.

Other dissemination activities

The information gathered through the initiative is intended to be used in future endeavours within CDU and within other opportunities that may arise. For example, WCE data was requested and has been used to demonstrate that there is a cohort of Indigenous researchers who would potentially be interested in the Diploma of Indigenous Research currently being developed by the School of Indigenous Knowledges and Public Policy at CDU.

Many internal CDU staff assisted WCE initiative staff to navigate organisational processes during implementation. Much time was spent attempting to influence internal organisational processes to cater to the demands associated with working in remote communities. These included:

- Providing feedback to human resources services about the importance of representation of remote Indigenous community members on selection panels during staff recruitment when it is appropriate, and making arrangements to do so;
- Providing feedback into a review of the CDU remote travel policy. This resulted in influencing the parameters of the tender and resulted in an invitation to participate on the tender panel;
- Providing feedback to ITMS regarding issues arising from the use of digital technologies when in remote communities, such as laptops.

Although we cannot state that these efforts have led to concrete change within organisational systems, it is hoped that they have contributed to raising of awareness regarding work in remote Indigenous communities.

Positive education experiences of five youth from Gunbalanya were recorded as part of a youth film project led by the school, and supported by WCE initiative, to highlight some of the challenges that these people faced, and how they overcame them. These stories are available at:


Other dissemination activities included:

- A team submission was made during the development phase of the CDU Strategic Plan 2015-2025. Feedback was provided to suggest that the WCE submission reinforced the need for ongoing remote community engagement and Indigenous leadership;
- Information exchange and partnership development visits have occurred at the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE), the Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education (CEEHE) and Wollotuka Institute at the University of Newcastle, Curtin University, University of Western Australia, Swinburne University of Technology, Monash University, and RMIT University.
- The WCE initiative provided in-kind and financial support for the organisation and facilitation of three national conferences in 2015, 2016 and 2017, which were valuable information exchange opportunities;
- The WCE initiative delivered 42 conference presentations and has contributed to publishing of 11 books or book chapters. This dissemination activities have related to topics such as remote Indigenous community education aspirations, remote Indigenous student experiences, Indigenous leadership and governance, Indigenous research and evaluation methods, social network analysis, participatory action research, Indigenous adult English LLN, community engagement and digital technologies for enhancing professional pathways. A large majority of conference presentations
were developed and delivered in collaboration with remote Indigenous community staff members to ensure the principles of inclusion and valuing Indigenous expertise were adhered to throughout.

A list of WCE publications is available at:


The Indigenous Leaders Conference: Engagement and the power of choice
Charles Darwin University, 10-11th November, 2016.

The WCE team was involved in the co-planning and co-delivery of the 2016 Indigenous Leaders Conference facilitated by the School of Education at CDU in partnership with BIITE, the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory (AMSANT) and OPVC-IL. More than 280 people gathered in Darwin to explore and debate the conference theme ‘engagement and the power of choice’.

There were multiple presentations, workshops and panel discussions facilitated by the WCE team, including many involving remote community-based staff. This demonstrated WCE’s strong commitment to collective action and partnership development. This provided a timely opportunity for the WCE team to report on key WCE findings, actions and outcomes from its work over the last two and a half years. This included presentations about community engagement, mentoring, metaphor use, educational leadership and governance, Indigenous adult LLN, and remote education research processes and achievements. Importantly, we also supported more than 30 youth from WCE communities to attend and learn from the conference, as strong and aspiring education leaders and advocates in their respective communities. This also provided an opportunity for intergenerational learning.

Further information about the conference can be found at:


7. Limitations

The limitations of this evaluation include that the amount and quality of evaluation data collected throughout the WCE initiative was variable. This report has attempted to make clear that the key learnings and achievements outlined in Chapters 4 and 5 have been written utilising triangulated data. Chapter 6 contains a summary of some developments across the initiative that cannot be claimed as being relevant to all partner communities, nor claimed to have demonstrated significant ‘outcomes’ at the time that the initiative ceased.

The cultural and linguistic barriers between evaluation staff and Indigenous community-based staff and stakeholders are always a consideration when conducting research or evaluation in this setting. It must be acknowledged that there may have been some degree of miscommunication, misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the meaning of information collected during the various data collection and analysis activities conducted throughout the initiative.

Finally, this report has been written by non-Indigenous program staff. It is not written from the perspectives of a lived Indigenous experience, nor does it intend to be. This evaluation report was written using available evidence to make evaluative judgements from the perspective of a non-Indigenous evaluators about the value of the approach, process and activities conducted as part of the WCE initiative. It is hoped that this report does justice to the significant amount of time and effort that was invested by the WCE team, and by our valued strategic and community partners.
8. Recommendations

This chapter includes a list of recommendations that have been drawn through WCE initiative implementation, as well as those that have been developed through the research process.

Recommendations drawn from WCE initiative implementation

The following recommendations are for those involved in implementation of (higher) education programs and services relevant to remote Indigenous communities and have been made based on the evaluation findings of the implementation of the WCE initiative.

DESIGN AND PLANNING

Recommendation 1: Ensure projects have clear aims and objectives that emphasise sustainability and are cognisant of timeframes. Revisit these regularly to ensure ongoing clarity and track progress.

Recommendation 2: Clarify boundaries – for programs/projects and for evaluation.

Recommendation 3: Embed sufficient flexibility into programs/projects to enable remote Indigenous community leaders to take the lead in determining how aims and objectives will be achieved, with support if required.

APPROACH AND METHODS

Recommendation 4: Value Indigenous cultures as a rich part of Australia’s heritage and identity, and as an essential element of establishment of local control and ownership.

Recommendation 5: Embed reflection about interculturality in internal program evaluation and learning processes.

Recommendation 6: Prioritise Indigenous voices in programming decisions, but encourage debate and critical thinking involving other experts and the literature.

Recommendation 7: Agree to a common approach to research and evaluation, including data collection and dissemination systems. Ensure this is embedded from the outset and factored into the design of the project.

Recommendation 8: Factor timeframes and the socio-political, cultural and environmental context into determining program goals.

GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Recommendation 9: Agree on a clear purpose for governance structures. Align this with aims and objectives.

Recommendation 10: Prioritise purposeful, transparent and timely governance communication.

Recommendation 11: Do groundwork in establishing partnerships and pay attention to ongoing communication.

IMPLEMENTATION

Recommendation 12: Invest in the consultation and relationship development process, and systematise reflective learning within this.

Recommendation 13: Prioritise reflection on communication processes in program evaluation systems and processes.
**Recommendation 14:** Maximise digital literacy skills development, where required, as a means to assist with communication across geographic boundaries and for broader staff benefit.

**Recommendation 15:** Assess and consider organisational systems and processes when planning new projects.
Recommendations from remote Indigenous communities that partnered with the WCE initiative

The following recommendations are for those involved in educational policy development and implementation of (higher) education programs and services relevant to remote Indigenous communities. They have been made based on the findings of the exploratory action research processes undertaken in WCE partner communities. As has been described we cannot substantiate these recommendations based on evaluative data - since research approaches and methods employed in communities may not have been consistent across communities; and the research may not have been conducted rigorously according to Western research approaches. However, these recommendations have been informed by a research process that saw a deep level of engagement of remote Indigenous community leaders and stakeholders.

These recommendations have been drawn from Whole of Community Engagement Initiative (WCE) Community Evaluation Reports in addition to other data such as interviews with community stakeholders, WCE team workshops, field trip reports, minutes of meetings, artwork, videos and other data outlined on page 32.

IN SCHOOLS

The role of Assistant Teachers

Recommendation 16: Foster positive, mutually supportive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers.

Recommendation 17: Increase understanding of non-Indigenous teachers about the important role of Indigenous teachers in the school.

Recommendation 18: Take responsibility for ensuring professional development pathways for Indigenous staff – structured and supported pathways to full qualifications and career development opportunities.

Recommendation 19: Enhance the leadership role of Assistant Teachers within schools.

Family engagement

Recommendation 20: Improve levels of engagement with families in order to increase knowledge about, and build trust with, the school.

Recommendation 21: Support and provide education for families to equip them to be able to assist in and support their children’s learning.

Recommendation 22: Implement bullying and school safety programs that involve families to improve student attendance, engagement and minimise impacts on the broader community.

Culturally safe environments

Recommendation 23: Initiate/develop cultural competency training for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff that includes content around local Indigenous history and protocols.

Recommendation 24: Develop training resources to support sustainability of Indigenous and non-Indigenous teacher training efforts.

Curriculum and pedagogy

Recommendation 25: Implement Both Ways teaching and learning approaches from early childhood through to secondary education, supported by Elders.
Recommendation 26: Increase subject choices for students completing Northern Territory Certificate of Education (NTCET).

*English LLN*

**Recommendation 27:** Continue to invest in English LLN student outcomes.

*Bilingual education*

**Recommendation 28:** Continue to develop bilingual programs, developed with local Indigenous subject experts, with research and evaluation embedded within.

**Recommendation 29:** Develop language and culture resources.

*Mentoring*

**Recommendation 30:** Establish or support academic mentoring programs in schools to support struggling students.

**Recommendation 31:** Implement cultural mentoring for students to improve engagement, respect and confidence.

*School governance*

**Recommendation 32:** Ensure school governance structures are representative of the local community.

**Recommendation 33:** Provide support for local Indigenous community members, where required, to actively participate in decision making processes in school governance structures.

**Recommendation 34:** Ensure school governance processes are facilitated in a way that is inclusive of local Indigenous community representatives.

**IN COMMUNITIES**

*Employment*

**Recommendation 35:** Designate local employment opportunities, particularly in management roles, for local people and ensure formal and informal study pathways and support are linked to career progression.

*Community organisations*

**Recommendation 36:** Foster Both Ways working cultures – ie. equal value for diverse perspectives and knowledge systems.

**Recommendation 37:** Provide induction training for new, non-local Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff about community context, cultural protocols, leadership structures and networks etc.

**Recommendation 38:** Collaborate across sectors to ensure Indigenous student further and higher education pathways are well coordinated and supported.

**Recommendation 39:** Monitor and evaluate education/training initiatives and keep accessible and continuous records of individual participation and achievement.

*Community governance*

**Recommendation 40:** Improve mechanisms for supporting community governing organisations to more effectively govern.
Recommendation 41: Provide governance training and support for local Indigenous community champions.

**Learning centres**

Recommendation 42: Establish or support already established adult learning centres to strengthen local community capacity to lead and provide informal, accredited and non-accredited education and training.

**Youth**

Recommendation 43: Develop youth engagement programs to provide positive support and learning opportunities for marginalised youth.

Recommendation 44: Include perspectives of Indigenous youth in the design and delivery of programs and services aiming to support and engage with youth.

Recommendation 45: Support youth leadership capacity development initiatives for young people in communities.

**The WCE initiative**

Recommendation 46: Progress WCE developed local-level education action plans.

**FEDERAL AND TERRITORY GOVERNMENTS**

**Attitudes/cultures**

Recommendation 47: Ensure strengths-based approaches are adopted when working in Indigenous settings or with Indigenous people.

Recommendation 48: Instil hope, expectations and aspirations for life-long learning in Indigenous education programs and services.

**Indigenous leadership and decision making**

Recommendation 49: Involve Indigenous leaders, Elders, educators, and youth in decision making relating to education policy and practice.

**Adult English LLN**

Recommendation 50: Support, implement and extend the recommendations contained in the Action Statement for Indigenous Adult English LLN in the NT.

**Investment in locally driven initiatives**

Recommendation 51: Invest in homelands education and other locally run institutions.


Recommendation 53: Continue or increase investment in Indigenous teacher training programs and support, modelled on past programs such as the Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education (RATE) Program.


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**Programming**

**Recommendation 55:** Lengthen program funding timeframes to maximise potential to achieve sustainable change.

**Recommendation 56:** Ensure flexibility in anticipated program outcomes and measures of success (and move away from narrow output focused approaches).

**Recommendation 57:** Increase responsiveness to research and evaluation data.

**Recommendation 58:** Learn from exemplars and models of education service delivery that have worked well in the past.

**Coordination**

**Recommendation 59:** Improve coordination across different levels of government (Territory and federal) and across sectors – housing, health, employment, corrections etc. – and adopt a ‘whole of government’ approach to Indigenous higher education policy and programs.

**FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

**Coordination**

**Recommendation 60:** Improve coordination of education delivery between BIITE, CDU and other Registered Training Organisations.

**Remote community engagement and education delivery**

**Recommendation 61:** BIITE and CDU and partner organisations continue advocacy regarding funding and provision of community-based training and education services.

**Recommendation 62:** Sustainably invest in community engagement initiatives within communities that build understanding about higher education and pathways/study options and support mechanisms.

**Recommendation 63:** Inform and support Indigenous community members to ensure they have access to up-to-date and appropriate information and understanding about study options, support services and contacts.

**RESEARCH**

**Youth**

**Recommendation 64:** Conduct more research with young people and youth to improve understanding about reasons for not attending school.

**Local Indigenous research**

**Recommendation 65:** Conduct locally-driven, locally conducted education research, incorporating local Indigenous methods of research.

**Recommendation 66:** Build local research capacity eg. developing community-based archives (or support for archival services) and local research centres.

**Recommendation 67:** Conduct further research in remote Indigenous communities to investigate exemplar school models and educational histories.
9. Conclusion

The WCE initiative was a valuable opportunity to undertake remote Indigenous community-led research and action in focusing on pathways into higher education for remote Indigenous communities. It was an ambitious undertaking within a relatively short timeframe in this context. A number of implementation challenges, often influenced by this short timeframe, meant that project aims and approaches evolved. Initially, the focus was on educational attainment within schools. In choosing to work in a ‘community-led’ way, the dilemmas that were presented throughout the implementation process for project staff and stakeholders were multiple. Although diverse in their focus areas, a range of initiatives have now been established that were developed in close consultation with local Indigenous leaders and stakeholders. Some of them do, however, require further funding to continue.

The presence of well-resourced design and planning stages are absolutely fundamental to effective implementation of any short-term government funded initiative. The design, consultation and planning phase of this project was rushed because of a short window to submit the funding application, a delay in commencement and the overall short funding period. The aims and objectives were broad and open to being interpreted in different ways. This had both advantages as well as disadvantages, however, increased the potential for lack of clarity about the purpose of high-level strategic partnerships. Choosing to take a developmental approach should have assisted in the resolution of some of the challenges that were presented. The research and evaluation design did not function as anticipated. The initiative attempted an approach that had not been tried in this setting in an initiative of this scale before, and efforts to ensure that Indigenous voices were given primacy throughout the process should be commended. When attempting to work in a flexible way, though, there still must be clarity in project aims to ensure that there is agreement amongst all involved stakeholders from the outset.

The WCE initiative invested in the process of exploring remote Indigenous community perspectives of higher education. Amplifying Indigenous leadership and perspectives, working in true partnership, and responding to the complexity of remote Indigenous communities brought about benefits for the building of relationships and ownership over the process. A result of the Indigenous led research process is recommendations that are strongly informed by the perspectives of remote Indigenous communities. This research has given a voice to remote Indigenous communities in the higher education setting and will be useful for informing future Indigenous education programs and policy.

Linking these perspectives with existing strategies for achieving quality of life aspirations was more difficult. At the community level, this certainly happened. Oftentimes the WCE initiative was, in fact, utilised as an opportunity for community schools and other stakeholders to further their own agendas in relation to advancing educational outcomes for their communities. Implementation challenges made integrating community perspectives at the ‘systems’ level more of a challenge. In any case, change at this level takes time. It is unlikely, given the timeframe and the complex environmental, political and socio-cultural factors at play, that significant change to education systems could have been achieved.

Some ongoing opportunities for community, research and academic leaders to engage in mutually beneficial and critical relationships have been established. Relationships were formed between remote Indigenous community leaders in six communities that have already seen increased remote Indigenous participation in a number of research initiatives within CDU in addition to raising organisational awareness regarding work in remote Indigenous settings. Relationships were established or strengthened between communities and a number of NT Indigenous higher education stakeholders and between stakeholders within communities. Implementation factors, again, together with complexities in organisational relationships and histories impacted on the potential for relationships to be strengthened between some
relevant stakeholders and public policy makers. It is hoped that momentum gained in Territory-wide adult language, literacy and numeracy networks will continue beyond the WCE initiative and be led and owned by those who have been heavily involved to date.

The WCE initiative identified means for making education relevant and culturally and physically accessible through the development of a set of recommendations that remote Indigenous community leaders see as being enablers to create more accessible pathways into higher education. Practical application of these recommendations, in order to continue to influence change within organisations, institutions and governments is worthy of at least another five years for implementation, if not ten.

It was major part of the WCE approach that remote Indigenous perspectives, priorities and needs would be a focus throughout the process. The WCE initiative, despite its many implementation challenges, has reinforced the fact that culturally- and contextually-responsive approaches, given time and flexibility, result in community ownership and control over solutions.
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www.remotengagetoeedu.com.au
Appendices 3-8 – WCE Community Evaluation Reports
Galiwin’ku Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Evaluation Report

Turtle Hunt Metaphor

Report prepared by
Dr Eliani Boton, Ms Rosemary Gundjarranbuy and Associate Professor James Smith
The Historical based on turtle hunt.

“It is based on turtle hunt and it’s regard to sharing experiences. The average/approximate number involved in turtle hunting, is 2/3 people. This team goes in one canoe (dingy) and uses different strategies to catch the turtle, The person which stands and holding s spear is called Djambatj “Great hunter”. He knows when to spear the turtle, the other person next to him looks after the hunter spears the turtle, the person in the middle shares one name while the other ensures no water goes in the canoe. The captain knows where they should go and find the next reef. After they spear the turtle they share the parts according to the turtle.” Written by Beulah Mewura Munyarrryun

Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.

DISCLAIMER

This report was written by the stated authors and does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative of the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership of Charles Darwin University. It provides multiple perspectives and reflections on engagement with a range of stakeholders over time and is not intended to be definitive, comprehensive or imply community consensus with the views expressed.

Warning: Images of deceased persons may appear in this report.

SUGGESTED CITATION

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Collaboration (Ralmanapan’mirr) between WCE and Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw

The two drawings on the cover were created by Yalu staff. The first one is titled Turtle Hunting, and it represents the way they work collaboratively to accomplish any task in community. According to Yolŋu\(^1\) culture, nothing is accomplished alone; each team member has an important role. When everyone works together, the aim is achieved. This is how Yolŋu people keep their traditional ways. The second one was painted by local rangers, who are part of the Yalu team, and it is titled Hunting and Food Gathering, 2016.

Acknowledgements

The completion of the Whole of Community Engagement initiative in Galiwin’ku depended upon cooperation and combined efforts of several people and organisations. We are grateful to the Galiwin’ku community, their families, custodians, cultural advisers, Elders and traditional owners who participated in and worked alongside us. Thank you for welcoming us all with an open heart and for your willingness to walk alongside us.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the following people and organisations.

- Rosemary Gundjarranbuy, Elaine Ġawurrpa Maypilama, Evonne Mitjarrandi, Dorothy Bebuka, Beulah Mewura Munyarryun, Delvine Munyarryun, Shelley Houghton and all Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw staff for sharing their wisdom and enthusiasm during the planning and delivery of all activities

- Margaret Miller and Noela Hall for working alongside the cultural advisors and Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw staff to run workshops while supporting Yolŋu and Balanda\(^2\) teachers to learn together

- Simon Cotton (Principal) and John Bradbury (Deputy Principal) at Shepherdson College for providing the space and supporting all WCE activities held within the school

- Our funders, the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme (HEPPP)

- Charles Darwin University (CDU), Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges in Education (ACIKE), Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), The Northern Territory Department of Education (NT DoE)

- The former Office of Pro-Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership (OPVCIL), Professor Steve Larkin, Wendy Ludwig (Acting OPVCIL) and James Smith (WCE Program Manager)

- Cat Street (Evaluation Coordinator) and all other WCE initiative staff.

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1  ‘Yolŋu’ refers to Indigenous people of the East Arnhem region of the Northern Territory.
2  ‘Balanda’ is used to refer to Western people or knowledge systems.
Introduction

The Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative is funded by the Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP) of the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training. This is being led through the Office of Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University in partnership with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance, and the Northern Territory (NT) Department of Education.

The aim of the WCE initiative is to engage six remote and very remote Indigenous communities in the NT to build aspiration, expectation and capacity for higher education, supporting strong, sustainable pathways from early childhood through to lifelong post-secondary education.

Objectives include:

Using whole-of-community engagement strategies, inspire six targeted remote and very remote Indigenous communities to include higher education among their normal expectations, by:

- exploring current community perspectives of higher education, and linking with existing strategies for achieving quality of life aspirations;
- co-creating ongoing opportunities for community, research, academic and public policy leaders to engage in mutually beneficial and critical relationships; and
- identifying means for making education relevant and culturally and physically accessible with a view to establishing strong and sustainable educational pathways from early childhood to lifelong post-secondary education.

Galiwin’ku is one of the six communities in the NT participating in the WCE initiative and one of the two communities located in the East Arnhem region. Other communities WCE has worked in partnership with include Maningrida and Gunbalanya (West Arnhem), Yirrkala (East Arnhem) and Tennant Creek and Yuendumu (Central Desert).

The planning and implementation of WCE in Galiwin’ku has been approached as a partnership between CDU and Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw and has predominantly focused on engagement with the local school, Shepherdsong College.
Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw

Yalu is a Yolŋu word meaning “bird’s nest.” In this case, Yalu is a metaphor for the learning or nurturing place. It was established to support the community by providing education related workshops and conducting research on education, health and wellbeing. Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw began in April 2000, when Elaine Läwurrpa Maypilama was contracted by the Aboriginal Tropical Health Unit in Darwin to explore connections between health and education in the community. It was a trial project of six months. Many ideas were generated as a consequence of the research and community consultations, and plan of action emerged. Since then Yalu has become stronger and gained the respect and appreciation of the community. Yalu’s philosophy is simple, in the words of Dorothy Bebuka (depicted by Yalu’s logo below):

The egg in the nest is about to hatch and the mother nurtures the young chick so it can learn to fly. Then she hands it over to the men, for the next stage in his life, where he will grow and develop. That is why we call ourselves Yalu, because it is the women who are nurturing the egg.

For the last 16 years, Yalu has delivered a variety of workshops and education sessions and worked alongside Charles Darwin University (CDU), as well as other universities and organisations on a number of research projects. As a result of these collaborations, a large amount of resources (videos, photos, educational material) have been produced and used to enhance the capacity of the local Yolŋu community.

According to Yalu’s Manager, Rosemary Gundjarranbuy:

We have a hub called Yalu where all the people meet and share Yolŋu culture. We have a strong culture and strong beliefs that need to be taught to the children so they can keep our culture strong. Yalu is a place where we share our strong knowledge of this island and we are connected to this land, the sea, the trees, the rocks, the sand, the clouds, the sun, the moon, and the stars. At Yalu, Yolŋu people can come and learn in Yolŋu room and Yolŋu ways. They can feel comfortable and share what is best for the community. This is the way Yalu operates: Yolŋu run the show. Yalu is a place where we can meet together, both young and old. Yalu is where everything starts, and it is a place to strengthen children and families and a nurturing centre of our lifestyle.

Yolŋu educators work within a model of providing access to meaningful information in local languages. They achieved this by being responsive to local cultural and communication protocols.
Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw staff and profiles

WCE staff worked alongside the manager of Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw, Rosemary Gundjarranbuy, in the WCE initiative. The following Yalu staff, whose photos and respective profiles are shown below, delivered or collaborated on the delivery of a number of activities.

Rosemary Gundjarranbuy is the current manager of the Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw. She is a senior Yolŋu educator and researcher who has extensive experience in school-based as well as health education. She has also worked on a range of other community projects related to youth wellbeing, aged care and child development research. Over the past three years, Gundjarranbuy has worked as the Coordinator of ‘Sharing the Full and True Stories about Chronic Conditions Project’, which was a partnership between CDU and Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw. Gundjarranbuy is currently managing WCE and other projects related to early childhood, higher education participation as well as a number of other research and service delivery projects.
Elaine Ławurrpa Maypilama is a resident of Galiwin’ku and an experienced Yolŋu researcher. She belongs to the Warramirri clan and connects to Galiwin’ku through her father’s father. She also speaks many dialects of Yolŋu Matha. Ławurrpa has worked extensively with CDU and Menzies School of Health for over twenty years, and has skillfully guided many non-Indigenous researchers to work with Yolŋu in ways that are ethical, mutually beneficial, and enable non-Indigenous and Yolŋu to understand each other’s knowledges. She is also a founder of the Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw Centre in Galiwin’ku. Ławurrpa has an Associate Diploma in Teaching (Batchelor Institute) and an Honorary Doctorate (CDU).

Dorothy Bebuka is from the Waramirri clan group. She speaks Gupapuyngu, Djambarrpuymugu and English languages. Dorothy works as a community worker for Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw supporting all programs and processes to strengthen and support families in the community. Her interests include helping people with difficulties, bringing Yolŋu law into programs and hunting.

Evonne Mitjarrandi is a qualified teacher with over 25 years of teaching experience. Currently she is working as a senior mentor and researcher in Galiwin’ku Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw Centre. Mitja’s interests include strengthening Yolŋu culture, language and traditions and she works passionately to incorporate these elements into the mentoring program.
**Beulah Mewura Munyarryun** is a Junior Mentor:

“My role is to mentor and coach the students at school and also see how they behave at school. I’m also helping the kids to develop their skills and telling them to stop teasing each other and focus on their work. Our job is to go down to the school, sit and help them understand or direct and guide them on their work. I love this work because it helps our children focus on their education and develop their skills, and to show them good pathways for their future.”

Mirmirryun Beulah Munyarryun

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**Delvine Munyarryun** is a Junior Mentor:

“I work for WCE at Yalu. I’m 31 years old and I would like to help the students develop their skills and stop teasing each other. I always wanted to help develop a program for them. Having groups for mentoring sessions is a good opportunity as it helps them learn good skills and get good education for securing a good future in school/community.”

Delvine Munyarryun
Margaret Miller is a teacher with over 30 years of experience working at Galiwinku in teaching and translation work and who has, on numerous occasions, run literacy courses at Galiwin’ku. She is currently employed by Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw and worked on the CDU-WCE cultural awareness training program. Margaret’s work on Elcho Island began as a qualified teacher with the Department of Education at Shepherdson College from 1981-1990, performing a variety of roles including cross cultural training in Djambarrpuynu. She has since been involved with the Djambarrpuynu Bible Translation Team translating the New Testament and promoting scriptures in Djambarrpuynu and other Yolŋu languages.

Shelley Houghton left the commercial sector in 1981, spending the following 17 years working with Indigenous Australians as part of Aboriginal Resource and Development Services (ARDS). Most of this time was spent assisting communities in areas of financial management and as a community educator. Shelley then worked for nine years as an accountant and CEO with local Indigenous councils in the Torres Strait, before moving into roles in West Papua in 2005, including establishing a successful grass-roots clean water program under the West Papuan Development Company. Shelley was the Organisation Mentor for Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw during the time WCE was working alongside Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw.
Noela Hall worked as a bilingual coordinator and Teacher Linguist for Shepherdson College from 1974 to 2012. Under the WCE Initiative, Noela delivered the Learning Together sessions, in October and early November, 2016.

Figure 9: Noela Hall facilitating biliteracy sessions at Shepherdson College.

Other Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw Staff

- Dorothy Gapany
- Lydia Baywani
- Aaron Mitjindi Wunungmurra
- Hazel Gondarra
- Lillian Marika
- Stephen Malwarriwuy Dhamarrandji
- Doris Yethun
- Manuel Dhurrkay
- Julian Redmond
WCE Staff and Profiles

Current WCE Staff

Dr Eliani Boton (Mentor and Engagement Officer, March - December 2016) has over 26 years working in the education sector and holds a PhD in Education (eLearning). Her areas of expertise include online course design and delivery, as well as the integration of culturally inclusive and appropriate pedagogical strategies for high student engagement and retention. She joined the Whole of Community Engagement initiative in March 2016, following her interest in supporting Indigenous students who aspire to further their studies.

Figure 10: Dr. Eliani Boton.

Former WCE Staff

Dr Bronwyn Rossingh (Community Engagement Leader, September 2014 - June 2016) has experience working with and for Aboriginal organisations and communities in Western Australia and the NT, and this extends over 25 years. She has been working in the education domain for over seven years. Bronwyn is a Fellow of CPA Australia, an editor for the Evaluation Journal of Australasia and a reviewer for the Alter Native-An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples. Bronwyn seeks to encourage and support Indigenous people to drive research and other projects in accordance with their own vision and aspirations.

Figure 11: Dr. Bronwyn Rossingh.
**Dr Matalena Tofa** (Mentor and Engagement Officer, November 2014 to December 2015) is from Aotearoa New Zealand. She has a PhD in human geography from Macquarie University and a Masters of Education from QUT. Her research interests include Indigenous rights, Indigenous development, postcolonial and postdevelopment theory, collaborative and participatory practices, environmental management, and social impacts.

![Dr Matalena Tofa](image)

**Figure 12: Dr. Matalena Tofa.**

**Dr Ḭawurrpa Maypilama** (Community Research Leader, January 2015 - October 2015) – see profile on page 6.
Galiwin’ku Community

Galiwin’ku is an Indigenous (Yolŋu) community situated approximately 550km northeast from Darwin on Elcho Island. The Island is around 50kms long and 6kms wide. Being the largest community in East Arnhem land, Galiwin’ku is based at the southern end of Elcho Island and has a seasonal population of around 2200.

Galiwin’ku is an Indigenous (Yolŋu) community situated approximately 550km northeast from Darwin on Elcho Island. The Island is around 50kms long and 6kms wide. Being the largest community in East Arnhem land, Galiwin’ku is based at the southern end of Elcho Island and has a seasonal population of around 2200.

According to The Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Coporation (2012, para. 5) there is a large number of tribal groups in Galiwin’ku. These include Wulkarra, Wangurri, Golpa, Guyamirrilil, Gumatj, Birrkili, Daywurrwurr (Gupapuyngu), Warramirri, Dhalwangu, Ritharrangu and Ganalbingu. There are 22 different dialects spoken in the community and Djambarrpuynnu is the most widely used in Galwin’ku. Galpa, Golpa, Golumala, Gumatj, Liya’gawumirr, Wangurri, Warramiri and Gupauyngu are also spoken.

Galiwin’ku has a local health centre that provides comprehensive primary health services to the community. There are also a range of public health and targeted program activities that aim to educate and improve access to health services and information for the community. There are many artists in Galiwin’ku whose arts and crafts can be seen in the local Elcho Island Art and Craft Centre. Regular exhibitions for these works are held across the Northern Territory. The local artists specialise in producing both traditional Yolŋu style art as well as more contemporary designs. The artists produce bark paintings and hand carved, painted hollow logs. They make a variety of baskets, bags and jewellery using fibres and also create wonderful sculptural works. Some Elcho artists have travelled overseas to exhibit and promote their crafts, with great success.

Local Governance

The East Arnhem Shire Council provides local government services for Galiwin’ku, which is in the Shire’s Gumurr Marthakal Ward. The Gumurr Marthakal Ward is one of six wards in the Shire and elects three of the 14 council members. The Shire headquarters are in Nhulunbuy and it has a service delivery centre in Galiwin’ku (East Arnhem Shire Council, 2012). The Council is comprised of representatives of each clan group that lives in Galiwin’ku. The Council policies reflect pride in Yolŋu culture and traditions. The Council also adopts an advocacy role for the community in the wider Australian context.

The Galiwin’ku community is keen to enhance Yolŋu governance and leadership and streamline consultancy processes. Their traditional Yolŋu systems of governance remain very strong and they see themselves as living under Indigenous law first and Balanda law second.
Community Education Context

Shepherdson College is the local school, offering education from preschool to Year 12. The Bilingual Program at Shepherdson College started in 1974. The school has currently about 700 students enrolled and continues to offer a comprehensive bilingual education program from preschool to primary. Senior secondary have the opportunity to do Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses and complete the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training.

![Shepherdson College]

Their bilingual program has a strong learning focus on literacy and numeracy through the two languages of Djambarrpuynu and English. Formal English reading and writing begins in Year 4. Delivery of classes is done by teaching teams, formed by non-Indigenous and Yolŋu teachers, who work together in a rich cross-cultural teaching and learning context. Shepherdson College describes itself as a ‘Learning on Country’ school, which endeavours to bring cultural meaning to the traditional curriculum. Shepherdson College offers a cultural education program and a nutrition program for healthy lunches is also provided.

Key Stakeholders

On 19 November 2014, the Manager of Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw Indigenous Corporation, Ms Rosemary Gundjarranbuy provided a letter of support that Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw was “interested in improving and strengthening education pathways for the people of the Galiwin’ku community...We would like to work closely with your team and look forward to improving and strengthening educational pathways together.” Further community engagement work took place over the subsequent months, ultimately resulting in the establishment of two service level agreements (SLAs) between both agencies.

The first service agreement between CDU and Yalu concluded in December 2015. Another service agreement was signed off in May 2016 to continue this partnership throughout 2016. This service agreement involved a number of activities, which were made possible thanks to Shepherdson College. Those activities were conducted within the school, with the support of the Principal, Deputy Principal and all teaching staff.
Community Engagement Process

Galiwin’ku was one of the six preferred communities agreed by the WCE Steering Group. Community consultation commenced in October 2014 with key community members from Galiwin’ku about what the scope of WCE could be. Regular attendance at meetings with community leaders, school principals and staff, and community events underpinned the engagement process in Galiwin’ku. Importantly, early engagement included the proposed establishment of a ‘backbone’ committee to provide guidance about project priorities and activities. Its establishment was initially supported by Dr Bronwyn Rossingh and Dr Elaine Lawurrpa Maypilama. The inaugural meeting took place on 29 October 2014. Due to a wide range of reasons the committee did not continue to meet as a group on a regular basis. Rather, key stakeholders from that committee remained involved in individual or small group discussions throughout the course of the WCE initiative. There was, however, strong interest in the project from the outset. The WCE objectives were also formally presented to Yalu Marnggithinyaraw Indigenous Corporation in October 2014 and later to the East Arnhem Advisory Council - Community Advisory Board on 10 December 2014. A letter of support and a respective affirmative motion reflected the community support and preference for a partnership approach.

Initial themes identified during the early community engagement process included:

- High concern about the current education pathways in Galiwin’ku
- High concern that employment pathways are very limited due to the low mainstream education levels of Yolŋu people
- Bi-lingual education needs to be valued and strengthened
- Adult learners need more training options linked to academic levels and qualifications that will lead to a higher employment status
- There is a need to develop a stronger engagement process between community and schools so Yolŋu feel comfortable in talking to teachers
- Structured pathway learning ‘from aspirations to reality’ should be explored
WCE staff were unable to travel to Galiwin’ku for over two months due to Cyclone Lam (February 2015) and Cyclone Nathan (March 2015). Cyclone Lam was a Category four cyclone and caused extensive damage to housing and infrastructure in Galiwin’ku (Elcho Island). In addition to broader traumatic impacts of this event, significant damage was done to the Yalu office. For two months, staff were working in a donga, approximately 12 x 6 metres in size, and sharing the space with staff of two other programs. This brought huge challenges for the running of programs managed by the organisation, which included the WCE initiative.

This made it extremely difficult to progress the community engagement process ‘on the ground’ during the early stages of the initiative (although it also meant that Dr Maypilama was supported to travel to Darwin to continue planning during this chaotic period). Community priorities were re-directed towards housing and infrastructure development at that time. In tandem, there were constant changes to school leadership during this period (i.e. ten different principals across the course of the first 18 months). These delays and constant changes were problematic, yet planning and implementation continued in consultation with community stakeholders, wherever possible. Targeted activities occurred during this re-introduction period, including mentoring sessions with six young people in relation to pathway development and access to VET and HE courses; and four students and a teacher from Shepherdson College were supported to attend the Menzies School of Health Research (MSHR) Pathways Program.

Community ownership was always deemed as being very important. As previously discussed, a SLA was drafted with Yalu Marnggithinyaraw to implement activities such as mentoring programs; culturally appropriate training and support for researchers and mentors; two-way learning approaches to strengthen understandings of Western and Indigenous knowledge systems within an educational setting; community education and employment pathway mapping; and cultural advice, guidance and linguistic support to WCE staff. This SLA was formally executed on 29th June 2015. Implementation of the SLA commenced in July 2015. Two staff commenced as community-based mentors – Beulah Munyarryun and Hazel Gondarra. Early activities included:

- hosting community planning sessions to brainstorm ideas and seek guidance and advice from community leaders for the WCE initiative;
- recruitment of new Indigenous researchers for collecting of stories on the educational experiences of community members;
• training and mentorship of community based researchers, regarding interviews, transcribing and reporting;
• planning for after-school sessions and working with disengaged students; and
• developing education pathway maps.

There were many learnings during the development and implementation of the first SLA, which were used to inform subsequent consultation associated with the parameters of the second SLA. The process of negotiating the parameters of each SLA is best conceptualised as an ongoing learning process between both parties.

There was a change in the Mentor and Engagement Officer role in the East Arnhem region at the beginning of 2016. The recruitment process was undertaken in February to re-appoint to this role. The selection panel included community representatives from both Yirrkala and Galiwin’ku. Dr Eliani Boton was subsequently appointed to this role on 7th March, 2016.
A high-level Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was executed between CDU, Menzies and Yalu’ in March 2016. This was useful for informing the development of a subsequent Service Level Agreement between CDU and Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw in May 2016, as part of the WCE initiative.

After additional consultation with Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw, it was decided that an ‘emergent’ rather than a ‘structured’ approach was most appropriate. This ensured community ownership of the delivery of services and it was paramount to their development. Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw had autonomy over all aspects of the activities developed and delivered, which resulted in greater commitment of the community members involved and high participation in the activities established through the SLA.

Genuine relationships have been developed through respectful consultation with the community members. At times WCE staff had to ask questions and seek clarity about the preferred course of action, considering each community has its own specific needs. The learning that came about as a result of critical reflection and based on feedback from Yalu’ staff resulted in respectful community consultation, which was highly valued. This process was expected to take time, considering Indigenous people prioritise the obligations they have to their own communities ahead of any other responsibilities with outside organisations and that there are many other contextual challenges. Despite some of these challenges, in the last stage of the initiative negotiations were flowing easily. Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw had ownership of the process, including design and delivery of activities.

WCE staff who worked in Galiwin’ku had many years’ experience working within remote Indigenous communities. The engagement strategies adopted throughout the course of WCE evolved, however, in response to the unique community context. WCE staff made sure that they scheduled visits to the community after consulting with Yalu staff about the most appropriate time. There were instances that travel had to be postponed due to local cultural events, funerals and/or ceremonies. The programs delivered as part of the WCE initiative had a strong focus in valuing local Aboriginal culture, knowledges and language, reflected in the sessions for teaching staff and student mentoring activities.
Allowing time for the work partnership to be established and have the flexibility to shape activities in the way that is culturally appropriate for the community proved to be successful. This is supported by Yalu staff, who observed enthusiasm and a high number of participants and attendance in many activities delivered in collaboration with Shepherdson College.

‘Both ways’ learning is a term commonly emphasised in Galiwin’ku; and when initiatives or programs, and their design, encompass cultural knowledge this leads to a greater commitment among local people. Having their own cultural and contextual perspectives built into their work makes their contribution to the community a more meaningful one. This led to some success in a number of activities as they developed, particularly during the later stages of this initiative.

Some other features of the relationship between WCE and Yalu that played an important role in its development are below:

- Focusing on community strengths rather than deficits
- Allowing time for reflections and decision-making
- Being flexible and understanding of the ‘emergent’ nature of what happens in the community
- Allowing flexibility for cultural practices and knowledge to underpin all activities
- Establishing a relationship based on mutual respect and interest
- Supporting Yolŋu control, empowerment and project ownership
- Having a Service Agreement with opportunities for the employment of community-based staff for the delivery of services
- Community-based staff (Yalu) developing their own rules and responsibilities, in writing, for each staff involved in the delivery of services
- Having all plans, reports and documents written alongside and approved by community-based staff

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3 ‘Both ways learning’ refers to an approach in which learning together occurs through the sharing of Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledges (Christie, 1987; Bayukarrpi et al 1994; Marika, 1999; Bat & Shore, 2013).
Participatory Action Research Process

The Galiwinku WCE initiative was participatory action research project. Explicit research activities to collect data on the higher education journeys of community members were conducted throughout the two years, and this formed part of the overall project, and actions were then implemented based on emerging findings. At the beginning of the initiative interviews and other research activities collecting data around Galiwin’ku community perspectives and experiences of higher education were sometimes performed by campus based staff. Sometimes these were conducted with the support of a local Indigenous researcher, and were conducted in both English and Yolŋu Matha.

The approach that we took to obtaining informed consent, which included communicating in local language, can be found at:

http://www.cdu.edu.au/research/ori/exemplar-cdu-research-project

Recognition of preferences for Indigenous-led research processes informed a different approach at later stages of the initiative. Non-Indigenous researchers cannot operate from Indigenous standpoints, even when this can be partly achieved by having a strong sense of cultural sensitivity and through following careful consideration of Indigenous research methods (Guenther, 2015). For the second SLA and after discussions with Yalu staff, it was decided that interviews were going to be performed and analysed by local Yolŋu researchers only. This allowed those being interviewed to feel more comfortable in sharing their views and stories, and for analysis from the Yolŋu standpoint. Evaluation evidence suggests that the new approach was preferred. Interviews were done “the Yolŋu way”, which means they were conducted in the form of narratives, or storytelling, where the interviewer asks questions that help people to tell stories about their experiences in their own way and from their own perspectives.

This change of approach emphasised community control and led to a high number of participants within a short time frame and considering the significant number of other programs of Yalu were running simultaneously. Research done by remote Indigenous community researchers takes time. Often both questions and responses involve a significant reflective process, and are explained in a way that tells a story. This is in contrast to a more direct approach often seen in the mainstream world. Participants were asked to present views on their education journey, challenges, successes and their recommendations for the improvement of pathways to further education. A total of eighteen interviews, including three school graduates, two school teachers, seven parents and six other community members were completed. Findings are presented in Figure 20.
What worked well?
- In the past (about 20 years ago), teachers who taught English and Yolŋu Matha used to be strict and requested that students read/write in both languages. That teaching style worked well.
- People had increased confidence as a result of completing further education.
- Education was a way to understand the Western world.
- Parents who completed further education are examples for the young adults who are now willing to follow their steps.

What were the challenges?
- Being away from home (for the ones who had to leave the community to acquire a diploma/degree).
- Having to learn academic English.
- Meeting cultural obligations.

What could help/support learning (looking into the future)?
- Continuous mentoring support (throughout the year, preferably daily).
- Parents need to support young students to leave the community temporarily to further their studies.
- Being able to attend cultural obligations.
- Professional development programs for Yolŋu teachers.
- Catering for students with special needs.
- Case management arrangements (mentors/teachers) supporting students who are having difficulties.
- Strategies to increase motivation to learn in the classroom (i.e. games and other activities).
- Increased participation between parents and the school (more meetings to discuss students’ learning and how parents can support this, i.e. talking with students about the importance of attending school and completing their education).

Other emerging themes:
- Learning outcomes have worsened – students are struggling to read and write (including Yolŋu Matha, not only English).
- There are more cases of young kids struggling with depression.
- Learning content needs to be engaging and culturally responsive (this is not always the way).
- More Yolŋu teachers need to move from being teacher assistants to fully qualified teachers.
- Need to engage and empower students for higher attendance. Cultural activities need to continue to be delivered in and out of school.
- Yolŋu teachers need to be an example of leadership in the way they present themselves in the classroom (self-confidence leading to leadership).
- More clear pathway from education to employment.
- Yolŋu pedagogy in all areas and levels of education.
- English literacy and numeracy to be offered to the whole community continuously – there are very low levels at the moment, including the ones who finish school.

Figure 19: Summary of emerging issues from interviews conducted in Galiwin’ku.
In 2016, the participatory action research cycle involved development of an action plan that had been developed through consultation with Yalu and the school. The action plan contained a number of specific strategies that would be implemented in partnership with the school. These are listed below.

1. Provision of IT resources to support research and other activities
2. Research and research capacity building activities
3. Employment of two Mentors and implementation of a mentoring program in the school
4. Employment of a Skills Development Officer to support the ongoing development of Yalu staff
5. Workforce development of Yolŋu teachers
6. Delivery of activities for education related workshops/training that promotes awareness of pathways into higher education
7. Ongoing funding for Yalu Manager for leadership, coordination and support for Yalu staff
8. Development and implementation of a Cultural Induction package for school staff

This action plan was reviewed, updated, and amended where necessary roughly once a month. The WCE campus based staff member worked with Yalu staff to reflect on and document progress on this action plan. Through learning what was and wasn’t working based on feedback and observations, some strategies were adjusted. These ‘tweaks’ were an important part of developing actions so that they would be better suited to the needs of stakeholders and therefore saw improvements in the process as the initiative progressed.

**Partnerships developed through WCE**

The main partnership that was nurtured through this project was between Yalu’ Marŋgithinyaraw and Shepherdson College. They worked in collaboration for the delivery of all activities established through the service agreement signed between CDU and Yalu. In addition to the service agreement, a longer-term MoU has been executed between Menzies, CDU and Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw to ensure sustainability of relationships beyond the timeframe of the WCE initiative. Negotiations for this MoU, and an event in Galiwinku to launch and celebrate the MoU, were supported by the WCE team.

**Key Actions and Achievements**

The following sections present some of the activities delivered as part of the second SLA with some comments on their successes and challenges. Consent was obtained to record participants’ quotes and their identity has been kept confidential.

1. **Student mentoring at Shepherdson College**
   For the mentoring activities, the Mentor and Engagement Officer and the mentors had a meeting to discuss how they envisaged their work to be delivered within the school in 2016. The mentors explained that they see a real difference between the Balanda way of mentoring and the Yolŋu way. The mentors say that going to school and supporting students with reading and writing is not enough. It is important that students learn traditional ways, which includes respect for elders, so they can also respect their teachers in class, who are mostly Balanda. According to the mentors, it is by learning their traditional ways that students are able to develop respect for others, listen to the teachers in school, and then progress with their studies. They report that it is by having role models that these students feel the desire to learn more, to become role models themselves and learn new skills, which lead them to become
more interested in continuing their studies. From these discussions, mentoring began to be delivered at Shepherdson College in 2016.

They also explained that it is crucial that a variety of activities are given to students so they feel engaged but are also learning other things that are important for their development and independence. These things include cultural protocols that are related to how students should behave in front of their parents and elders, but also within the school with other students and the teachers.

The total number of students mentored from June until November 2016 was thirty-two, from years five to eight. The total number of students attending classes per day was between five and seven as a maximum. Classes were initially roughly three times a week, which reduced later on in the year. A senior Yalu staff member led these activities with the support of two junior mentors. To support the mentoring program, the school allocated a room for the mentors to deliver their activities. The mentoring team developed reports to present to the Deputy Principal and the teachers. During meetings they analysed what the students required and any improvements were noted. Teachers and mentors started to make
joint decisions on the type of activities to be given to students. According to the senior mentor and school staff who were involved, the students who participated in the sessions started to demonstrate more interest in the classes, were learning more, and teachers were becoming increasingly supportive of the mentoring sessions.

Some early challenges in consultation and unavoidable ceremonial events impacted on its continuity, however, as eventually the frequency of classes slowed down towards the end of 2016. Yalu and the school recommended in future spending more time discussing the structure of the program to ensure that it is embedded. As it was not, there was some miscommunication between the two organisations and it did not continue in the final part of the year. Importantly, the junior mentors were not able to provide support for many weeks due to a sequence of ceremonies in the community.

The mentors did a good job of engaging with the students, however, it was recommended by Yalu staff that it would be beneficial in future to go through a formal recruitment process so that more experienced staff could apply. The mentors had only limited access to books and other teaching resources, which was a challenge for them. All this aside, it was seen as something that did bring benefits for students by both the school and Yalu and the school is interested in continuing this program in the future.

Mentors supported Learning on Country program cultural activities, which is delivered through the school and highly valued. There has also been participation of other community members and elders during other cultural activities, delivered as part of school mentoring, as well as during the cultural awareness training delivered within Shepherdson College to all teaching staff. Their participation has been crucial and contributed to the success of all activities. They have participated through sharing their knowledge, telling local stories and explaining cultural protocols.

2. Cultural awareness training

Bilingual education and the Learning Together idea within the school has a long history. The school has been bilingual now for forty years, and part of this has, over time, been around strengthening the team teaching idea. This has, more recently, fluctuated depending on school leadership but has in the past included learning about things like gurrutu (the kinship system), local Indigenous culture and cultural identity to support a strong working relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff.

Yalu Marngithinyaraw, in collaboration with Shepherdson College, organised and delivered an eight week cultural awareness training program, supported by local cultural advisers and with the participation of all available teaching staff. After gathering ideas, views and suggestions from teaching staff, the cultural advisers started to organise their first few workshops. Part of the intention was to support the reestablishment of Learning Together. Attendance and participation was higher than expected, with most teachers attending, with the exception of when there were funerals/ceremonies in community. The total of participants attending were 42 in 8 sessions, with an average of 30 attending each class.

The first few workshops presented an introduction to gurrutu. The group learnt about the complexity in differing levels of relationships and how reciprocal bonds of relationship work. Non-Indigenous participants were able to develop a basic understanding of what it is, how it works and start to become more familiar with the names used to describe the different family relationships. As most people working in Galiwin’ku have been ‘adopted’ into Yolŋu families, it has been an opportunity for everyone to understand the kinship structure better.

The facilitators gave the participants some fun activities so people could understand how connected they are with others around them. Adopting non-Yolŋu people into their families is a way for Yolŋu people to
be able to understand how they should relate with you. It is also a way of demonstrating that want to support everyone who lives or frequently visits their community, as in the words of the facilitator to the group:

“No, you know how connected you are with all the other people in this room and in this community. We are here to support you, that’s why you have been adopted into our families. You are never alone.”

Testament to this, a Balanda staff member who attended the training sessions stated:

“… it was actually said by the Yolŋu people at the Learning Together that they acknowledged that we’ve left our families and we don’t have connections here and made it a very, very strong point that we make connections now. This is how we can do it and yeah, I don’t know. I don’t mean to sound over-emotional on it, but it’s actually to be able to stay here long term, happily, it’s very important.”

The facilitators explained the importance for all teachers to perform a similar gurrutu activity in class on the first day to allow students to get to know their relationship with one another and with their teachers. The cultural advisors explained that this supports student engagement and has also a role in minimising bullying, as kids become aware of their family connections with one other. Due to the success of these workshops and being very well received by all teaching staff, the staff requested that they continued to be delivered throughout Term 3. The additional classes continued to be well attended.

Figure 22: Cultural awareness training at Shepherdson College.
The philosophy of Learning Together is extremely important to Yolŋu teachers in Galiwin’ku. One Yolŋu teacher reported that:

“… if both school and the community work together… It’s very, very supportive that way. Some of our colleagues here at Shepherdsone College for instance, like Balanda teachers, they are new to this community… that person as a teacher, is an English speaker, they don’t have Yolŋu language or understanding. If it doesn’t continue, how can we try and support those yothu [children]?”

It was anecdotally reported that attendance of Yolŋu teachers had increased towards the end of the year. In 2016, the school saw more stable school leadership and re-establishment of the Learning on Country program, as well as delivery of cultural awareness training. It would be impossible to determine a single factor that has caused this, however, the school reports that a number of factors have contributed to a positive change in the school environment and increase in the Yolŋu voice.

A senior non-teaching staff member commented that:

“The program has certainly been important in that huge cultural shift and shift in expectations in what happens in the school and what the Yolŋu voice is… [The cultural awareness training] is certainly something that everyone can see the value of… Indigenous attendance; Assistant Teachers had really dropped off, but that has started to really pick up again so a lot more of our Indigenous vocation staff staying and taking part.”

A number of non-Indigenous teachers mentioned that the workshops have made them reflect on their role as a teacher in the community. One staff member who was relatively new to her role in the school said:

“It’s taught me a lot about how to work within the community. I’ve learnt a lot about the relationships and listening and understanding; patience…”

Although the cultural awareness training was only running for a relatively short term, it was received very well by the school. A video was produced by the facilitators to document the training (refer to ‘Resources’). In 2017, it is envisaged that the partnership developed between Yalu and Shepherdsone College will support further work in relation to cultural awareness and other Learning Together sessions, subject to funding availability to support this.
3. Supporting the workforce development of Yolŋu assistant teachers: Learning Together

Yalu organised weekly meetings with Yolŋu teachers every Friday at Shepherdson College from July 2016. During these meetings, the teachers wrote a collective statement containing an outline of what they would like to see happening in the school (relating to their work as Assistant Teachers). The document is in Yolŋu Matha. It identifies important areas such as how to work with the Balanda teachers and parents to discipline students; the dynamics of their team work with the Balanda teachers and how to create balance and harmony, how they can be more productive as well as assertive in the classroom, and other matters related to their own professional development.

These are now the focus of discussions between Yalu (representing the Yolŋu teachers) and school management. According to a staff member who is a teacher, translator and co-facilitator of the cultural awareness training, some small changes were starting to occur as a result of positive responses from the Principal and Deputy Principal. One of the examples was that parents were being invited to go to the school for discussions with the team teachers regarding students’ behaviour in class. She also added that this was the first time she had seen the Yolŋu teachers present such assertiveness. She reports that the continuous meetings and support received from Yalu staff has helped them to develop this assertiveness. Yalu collected feedback from Yolŋu Teachers and the responses were very positive.

After consultation with teaching staff, it was decided that professional development activities for Yolŋu teachers should be shaped slightly differently. In addition to individual support that a consultant provided to Yolŋu teachers who were completing the Bachelor Degree, a sequence of workshops was suggested, which was agreed to by the Principal. These sessions were eventually held during Learning Together time, as the cultural awareness training sessions had finished. Balanda teachers were also invited and encouraged to attend.

The sessions focused on developing biliteracy knowledge and skills and aimed to value, retain and develop staff. This became the focus of the Learning Together sessions because proficiency in literacy is a prerequisite for effective teaching and learning in all subject areas. Learning Together is a historical practice of ‘both ways’ learning, which includes weekly sessions where Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff have the opportunity to share with, and learn from each other. These sessions were held weekly for a total of eight weeks. Some of the ideas underpinning the planning of these teacher-learner experiences were based on the Dimensions of Learning Model, as well as Freire’s theory of critical pedagogy. The facilitator explained that Yolŋu staff need higher levels of literacy in both English and Yolŋu Matha to be able to assist in the planning and delivery of a ‘two-way’ curriculum. On the other hand, Balanda staff need greater knowledge and understanding of the Yolŋu language, culture and world view to be able to assist in the planning and delivery of the curriculum. All staff need more knowledge, understanding and experience around language and literacy acquisition. A brief outline of the purpose and scope of the program is shown below in Figure 22. A video about this program was also produced (refer to ‘Resources’).
a) Developing successful and sustainable team teaching practices:
   - Developing teaching teams
   - Developing a culture of working in teams that sees all members of the College staff as equals, as both teachers and learners, valuing and sharing knowledge and expertise
   - Developing whole school ownership of the team teaching approach.

b) Scope and sequence of the program
This course was designed as a series of eight sessions of literacy instruction for both Yolŋu and Balanda staff to improve knowledge of decoding skills, including phonemic awareness and phonics, grammar, syntax, reading fluency, reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension of both English and Yolŋu Matha. It included a balanced and integrated range of listening, speaking, reading and writing activities in both Yolŋu Matha and English that required learners to be code breakers, meaning makers and critical users and analysts of texts. Each session included development of phonological awareness, graphophonics, vocabulary and comprehension, reading and writing fluency and socio-cultural concepts about reading and writing. The course provided opportunity to create texts for the future use of college students in a range of learning areas and included explicit teaching and learning of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Figure 24: Outline of biliteracy program.

Figure 25: Learning Together session.

It was a priority for the community to get Learning Together practices back up and running because quite a lot of staff turnover had meant that these sessions had not been happening for a while and new non-Indigenous teachers had not yet understood the Learning Together philosophy. One of the school staff commented that a big part of the workshops is about highlighting to non-Indigenous staff:

“How important the role of the assistant teacher is... It’s not just to yell at kids and sharpen pencils but actually as a mediator of relationships and a deliverer of first language and materials and to listen to these children’s conversations and say here’s where these children are at.”
Below are the comments from one Yolŋu teacher:

_We always wanted to learn together with Balanda. We want to walk together and learn together. I feel proud to be here today as we are helping Balanda teachers learn our language and how important it is to communicate properly with our kids in the classroom. We are becoming a strong team now. It is our vision and we are starting to achieve this by learning and sharing together._

The Learning Together bilingual literacy sessions had a total of 46 participants, with an average of 33 attending weekly, as during that period the community had a few ceremonies that prevented some Yolŋu teachers to attend.

### 4. Other Yalu WCE initiatives

Foundation skills include a combination of English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills, digital literacy, mathematical ideas in addition to employability skills such as collaboration, problem solving and information and communication technology skills (SCOTSESE, 2012). Such skills are essential to participation in the workforce, and bring benefits to individuals, workplaces and communities. Financial support for the Skills Development Officer and for the ongoing employment of the Yalu Manager contributed to the development of these skills of Yalu staff and therefore the development of Yalu as an organisation. However, this is very much part of an ongoing process and there are many other factors involved. The Manager reported that several new staff members have developed confidence in doing planning activities and record keeping. Attendance of five Yalu staff members at the Remote Indigenous Youth Leaders’ Summit contributed to this.

“... he’s getting that confidence now and I think for the next step is going to be probably stepping forward to probably either like example, to either my position or probably, we will put him to in charge of the staff, like for later on”

“I’ve seen all my team, they changed. They wanted to do - when I gave them like, ‘You want to do the planning for next week’s program to school?’ and it was like [clicks fingers] ‘boom!’ they just went straight and they did their own planning.”

According to the Yalu Manager, the key achievements for Yalu for 2016 have been:

“Feeling supported and comfortable, learning together, learning new things together, working together... sharing ideas, feeling free to share, planning together, Yolŋu teaching.”

Although the development of these skills is a lifelong process, and in the organisational setting there are numerous other contributors that play a role, it was reported that WCE’s support in this area was highly valued.

### Community vision

The community of Galiwinku would like to see an increased number of students being able to graduate with a university degree. Improved participation of parents in the school would support this. The community would like to see more English literacy and academic writing courses being offered as well as professional development programs for Yolŋu teachers. Here follows some statements from some of the parents who were interviewed:
I want to see my children finish school and go to university. Too many kids go from school directly to Centrelink. I want to see a better future for all children in this community.

When I finished school, many years ago, I could write and speak English, no problems. I do not use English anymore, as I live and work here. But I don’t see the kids here speaking and writing English. I think the school needs to offer more support and better classes. I don’t know if my children will be ready to start university because of this.

We need to see stronger Yolŋu teachers here. We need more Yolŋu in the classroom, but they need support, they also need to complete their diplomas.

The provision of business and counselling courses have also been mentioned as crucial for the community, where the first could enable a higher number of local people setting up their own businesses, and the latter would provide the training required to support the unfortunate increasing number of depression and suicide cases within the community. The following are comments made by two local community members:

*There are many people talking about starting a business here, from our people and to our own people, but where do we learn the skills? We cannot be away from family; we need courses here and more easily available to our people.*

*When kids are depressed they do not have a person to help them. We need counsellors to support them and our families here. At night we have these kids wandering around; maybe they cannot see a different future for them.*

According to the data collected during the research interviews, it is clear that the local community would like to see improved school attendance, a clearer pathway from education to employment, Yolŋu pedagogy in all areas and levels of education as well as an improved number of Yolŋu teachers moving from being assistants to fully qualified teachers.

**The School System**

To have any impact on the education pathways of remote Indigenous community members, the individual must be seen within an education ‘system’. In part due to the delay in establishing Yalu’s WCE programs, a targeted approach was taken in working with the school. In this case the Galiwin’ku school system was the focus. Within the school setting, Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw worked on a number of different strategies targeted at different elements of the school system. These included cultural competence of staff, confidence and knowledge of educational pathways for students, Yolŋu teachers’ career pathways, leadership and cultural awareness workshops, as described in this report. Yalu also works in collaboration with Shepherdson College through other programs, such as students’ social and emotional wellbeing, Learning on Country and workshop activities to support young parents.

According to Rosemary Gundjarranbuy, Yalu is now working more closely with the school leadership team, who are holding meetings with Yalu staff to discuss progress of activities and plan future ones together. Gundjarranbuy claims that because of the constant change in school management which saw nine principals in two years, in the recent past, this was not possible. It was therefore difficult, until later in 2015, to have closer and continuous contact with the Principal and Deputy Principal. With a more stable
school leadership system, Yalu staff have received a lot of support and the school has been receptive of new ideas for activities, especially because some benefits for the students and teaching staff are beginning to show. It is expected that their collaborative work will continue, hopefully progressing the work that they have so far developed and delivered together.

**Key challenges and outcomes**

During the initial phase of this initiative, the most challenging aspect was the negotiation between what community-based staff envisaged for the activities and what WCE expected in relation to the SLA. After a certain amount of time, things were not progressing. According to Yalu staff, and in discussions with WCE staff, an approach where they could always follow their own ways of working, be flexible and make changes as the work progressed was a more suitable approach. An ‘emergent’ rather than a ‘structured’ approach was most appropriate.

Another challenge faced was the timeframe of the initiative. WCE deadlines did not always meet with the ones determined by the community. It was also important not to create high expectations of whom to meet and which activities to be invited to participate in, during field visits. The best approach was to make sure that visiting dates had been agreed with Rosemary Gundjarranbuy (Yalu Manager). This is because Yalu staff have a range of other programs being run and management gets very busy with other stakeholders visiting and requesting meetings at the same time.

Yalu's work in mentoring, and cultural awareness and bilingual literacy sessions as part of Learning Together has contributed to some benefits for the school environment. This is, of course, within the context of several other factors already mentioned such as more stable school staff and re-establishment of the highly valued Learning on Country program. External factors, such as extreme weather (for example Cyclone Lam) and regular funerals in community continue to significantly influence community life. Despite this, some of the positive things that have been reported by staff at the school and Yalu include:

- Improving engagement of Yolŋu Assistant Teachers
- Increased interest in Yolŋu culture and the role of Yolŋu staff in the school by Balanda staff (Balanda and Yolŋu)
- Strong engagement of misbehaving children during mentoring sessions
- Increased confidence of Yalu staff in independently planning and documenting their work
- Yolŋu teachers began to demonstrate more confidence and willingness to complete their studies as assistant teachers (Diploma and Bachelor Degree)

It is important to highlight the significance of some of the small influences that some of the activities described in this report, in particular the cultural awareness training, had. Remote NT communities are highly complex settings. While acknowledging the strength and diversity of people, communities, environments and histories of remote Indigenous communities, as highlighted in this report there are also many challenges that remote communities students and learners face to educational progression. Staff turnover is often high in remote NT community schools, and language and culture barriers are huge. Beginning to building the understanding about Yolngu kinship system and language of non-Indigenous teachers and strengthening their relationship with Indigenous Assistant Teachers, families and the local community is a crucial part of making education journeys of students more meaningful and more accessible. Culturally appropriate student mentoring is just as important, however, the program that was established through WCE requires some tweaks to make it work better for both Yalu and the school.
It is important to highlight that change in complex settings is slow. The majority of the actions described in this report commenced only in mid-2016 due to a combination of factors that delayed progress in the project. Implementation challenges aside, the timeframe of the WCE initiative was a near-impossible barrier that we faced to achieving sustainability in our work. It should be acknowledged that short term funding is not an effective model for initiatives that focus on community development and empowerment. This project has laid some foundations for what could be continued into the future to support the education pathways of school students in this community, however, further funding is needed if they are to continue.

Recommendations

Based on the evaluation of Galiwinku WCE project, the following points are recommended by WCE and Yalu management:

- Interviews should always be conducted by local researchers in the traditional Yolŋu way.
- Learning Together and cultural awareness sessions should be continued within Shepherdson College as they have proved valuable in supporting the work the team teachers have started this year by sharing ideas and developing new ways of working together in the classroom.
- Work opportunities for local community people should continue to be advertised within the community. It should only go externally when/if a professional is not found or available within the community.
- Mentoring in school is crucial to support reading and writing Yolŋu Matha language skills and English, as well as participation in cultural activities (strengthening Indigenous language, identity and culture). These were identified by Yalu staff to be of extreme importance in increasing student engagement, motivation, respect and building students’ confidence. There is a need to engage and empower students for higher attendance – cultural activities need to be continuously supported in and out of school.
- There is a need for more Yolŋu teachers to acquire full degrees.
- Continued support is required for building the leadership of Yolŋu teachers.
- English LLN is fundamental to the educational advancement of remote communities.

These recommendations reflect what has been learned during the WCE initiative. It is a direct representation of the Galiwin’ku community educational perspectives and their views on what is required to continue with their work on strengthening pathways into higher education for their community.

Future directions

Yalu Marŋgithinyaraw is already planning and finding ways to be able to continue the services that they are currently providing in collaboration with Shepherdson College, such as mentoring of students and Yolŋu teachers as well as the cultural awareness training. Yalu is committed to continuing these activities and they will be open for discussions relating to future funding opportunities. Multiple grant applications were developed in partnership with Yalu in the latter half of 2016 to extend this work. They are also in discussions with CDU and other stakeholders about English LLN courses, to be delivered in Galiwinku in 2017. The visit of CDU staff to Yalu who performed LLN assessments, as part of a pilot program, was a
preliminary step towards having LLN courses delivered in the community in 2017, and beyond the WCE initiative.

Yalu is also considering the option of having counselling skills training for the mentors, administration courses and business training for locals, following current discussions on community needs. The main difficulty that the community has faced is the lack of accommodation options for people who need to travel to the community to deliver training and other services. Yalu is considering their options on buying a new or second-hand demountable to be upgraded and made available for visitors/workers who need to stay in Galiwin’ku to deliver their services. WCE has supported multiple grant submissions to extend projects that WCE supported the establishment for, in efforts to provide ongoing assistance to the operations of Yalu in responding to community priorities.

Yalu’s work has been crucial to the advancement of the broader community, as the WCE activities, delivered by them, have focused on strengthening education, local languages, culture and leadership. They have supported the creation of nurturing relationships between the school and the wider community. By working alongside Shepherdson College, Yalu has supported the creation of an inclusive environment for students and teachers. This approach leads to a positive learning culture that not only improves the educational outcomes for all students, but it also enhances their mental health, emotional and social wellbeing.

A metaphor describing the collaboration between WCE and Yalu

Gundjarranbuy and Lawurrpa use a Yolŋu metaphor to describe the collaborative work between WCE and the Galiwin’ku community during this initiative. It describes relationships and collaboration. It shows how they have evolved to bring positive outcomes for the community. It is here in their own words:

*Water comes running down the land to meet sea water. The water is really murky, carrying with it broken branches, dead leaves and lots of debris. The meeting of waters is turbulent and there is a lot of disruption. But suddenly, the waters start to mix and clear water emerges. They mix harmoniously. The disruption is suddenly gone. The sea is calm and peaceful again.*

This metaphor clearly describes that it has been a long journey for us all. Through the challenges we all discovered that open discussions only lead to closer working relationships, based on trust and respect. We hope that as a result of the WCE activities presented in this report, the team teachers continue on their journey, stronger than ever before, and that students are able to attain at higher levels of education.

Resources

The two videos showcasing these activities, which were made by community members are available on the WCE website for viewing. See:

References


Guenther, J 2015, ‘How can academia contribute to participatory methodologies for community engagement in the diverse cultural contexts of remote Australia?’, http://www.covaluator.net/docs/S1.4_academia_participatory_evaluations.pdf


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Gunbalanya Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Evaluation Report

Bininj and Balanda knowledge systems working together

Report prepared by
Millie Olcay, Dean Yibarbuk and Seraine Namundja
Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.

DISCLAIMER
This report was written by the stated authors and does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative of the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership of Charles Darwin University. It provides multiple perspectives and reflections on engagement with a range of stakeholders over time and is not intended to be definitive, comprehensive or imply community consensus with the views expressed.

Warning: Images of deceased persons may appear in this report.

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- Sue Trimble and Esther Djayhgurrnga (Co-Principals of Gunbalanya School) for supporting our work and providing us with work space and the opportunity to run workshops with interagency staff on school grounds;
- Our WCE partners – Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges in Education (ACIKE), Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) and the Northern Territory Department of Education (NT DoE).
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A note on language used: The terms ‘Indigenous’, ‘Aboriginal’, ‘Bininj’ (men) and ‘Daluk’ (women) are used interchangeably throughout this report to refer to First Nations people of Australia living in the remote West Arnhem community of Gunbalanya. ‘Balanda’ is used to refer to Western people or knowledge systems.

A note on quotes: The identity of the research participants has intentionally been kept confidential; consent was obtained to record these quotes.

A note on photos: Where first names only have been used to identify people in photos, this was intentional.
Gunbalanya Higher Education Pathway Research

Background

The Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative is funded by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.

The aim of WCE is to engage six remote and very remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory to build aspiration, expectation and capacity for higher education, supporting strong, sustainable pathways from early childhood through to lifelong post-secondary education.

Objectives include:

- Exploring current community perspectives of higher education, and linking with existing strategies for achieving quality of life aspirations;
- Co-creating ongoing opportunities for community, research, academic and public policy leaders to engage in mutually beneficial and critical relationships; and
- Identifying means for making education relevant and culturally and physically accessible

Gunbalanya is one of the six communities participating in the WCE initiative in the West Arnhem region. Other communities include Maningrida (West Arnhem), Yirrkala, Galiwinku (East Arnhem), Tennant Creek and Yuendumu (Central Desert).

In West Arnhem, the Community Engagement Leader and Mentor and Engagement Officer worked across both Gunbalanya and Maningrida communities, following a similar community engagement approach that was agreed and supported by both communities.
The research teams – WCE and ARPNet

Between October 2014 and December 2016, a total of six researchers were employed by the Office of Pro-Vice Chancellor-Indigenous Leadership, Charles Darwin University (CDU), to lead Participatory Action Research, exploring remote Indigenous higher education pathways in Gunbalanya, West Arnhem. An additional team of 15 community-based researchers were employed under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Service Level Agreement between the OPVC-IL and the Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network (ARPNet), auspiced by the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL) at CDU.

This is the first time, to our knowledge, that two teams of Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers have come together in this way, combining their research skills and knowledge to explore the perspectives and experiences of remote Indigenous young people, families, key community leaders and traditional owners, service providers and other key stakeholders living in community.

Some WCE and ARPNet researchers also worked in Maningrida (the other WCE community in the West Arnhem Region).

Current WCE Staff

Millie Olcay – Community Engagement Leader (Sep 2014 - Dec 2016)
Ms Millie Olcay (MEd by Research, Grad DipEd, BA Hons, Exec Dip, Dip, Cert IV TAE) brings over 18 years of experience with her in early childhood, primary and tertiary education, community engagement, inclusion and equity and in more recent years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and research in remote Indigenous communities in the NT. Her research specialises in participatory action research methodologies; engaging educators to design curriculum and pedagogy according to students’ voices, experiences and perspectives; pre-service teacher perspectives on online learning, reflective practice and community engagement; and perspectives on inclusive practices in remote Indigenous early childhood settings.
Dean Yibarbuk – Mentor and Engagement Officer (Jan - Dec 2016)
Dean has taken a prominent leadership role in developing contemporary land management programs to deal with conservation issues on Aboriginal land. A driving force behind the development of the Djelk rangers at Maningrida, Dean is also a senior ranger. He has also been a chairman of both Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation and Demed Association Inc.

Dean has been a key figure in the development of Warddeken Land Management Limited, the declaration of the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area and the development of a ground-breaking use of traditional knowledge of savannah burning practices to deal with climate change.

Dean is the Mentor and Facilitator of Warddeken Land Management Limited, a not-for-profit established to support a movement back to country linked to critical conservation issues. He has travelled widely in Australia and overseas to speak on fire management and other conservation issues.

Dean also is also founding director of the Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network (ARPNet) hosted by Charles Darwin University (CDU) and is currently working as the Mentor and Engagement Officer for the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative in both Maningrida and Gunbalanya. Dean has participated in a number of conference and projects – locally, nationally and internationally.

Seraine Namundja – Community Liaison Officer (Jan - Nov 2016)
Seraine Namundja has been working for the past 14 years in early childhood and primary education (as a Crèche Worker and Relief Teacher), in land management (as a Ranger) and Supervisor at DEMED Association, in employment (as a Centrelink Liaison Officer) and at the Department of Children and Families as a Community Worker. Currently, Seraine is the Cultural Liaison Officer, working in the West Arnhem Region in Gunbalanya community on the WCE initiative. She says, “This work is important because it involves working with my community about education to make it better for the future of my people.”

Seraine holds a Certificate III in Children’s Services and will be commencing her Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care in July 2016 at Charles Darwin University. She says, “I have chosen to do further study because I enjoy working with the little ones. Maybe one day I will become an early childhood teacher in the School.”
Former WCE Staff:
- Dean Yibarbuk – Lead Community Researcher (Feb-Dec 2015)
- Jamie Hagan – Mentor and Engagement Officer (Oct 2014- Jan 2016)
- Donna Stephens – Teacher Liaison Leader (Jan 2015 – Jan 2016)

ARPNet researchers (2015-2016):

**Team 1 - November 2015**
1. Serina Namarnyilk
2. Dean Yibarbuk
3. Evelyne Narronga
4. Gwen Nayilibidj
5. Christella Namundja
6. Sophia Nawirridj
7. Deborah Daniels
8. Geraldine Daniels
9. Eddie Phillips
10. Hmalan Hunter-Xenie

**Team 2 - April 2016**
1. Eddie Phillips
2. Dennis Naroldol
3. Timothy Nabegeyo
4. Kingswood Dirdi
5. Godfrey Blitner
6. Andy Wood
7. Hmalan Hunter-Xenie

Figure 5: ARPNet researchers in action.
Community context

Gunbalanya, also known as Oenpelli, is situated approximately 300 kilometres east of Darwin on the western border of Kakadu National Park. Gunbalanya is a community of approximately 1,500+ mainly Indigenous (with some non-Indigenous) people. The main language spoken is Kunwinjku, however, the community operates administratively in English. Access is gained with a permit (obtained through the Northern Land Council), but is limited due to seasonal conditions. In the dry season (May-Sept) there is road access, however, during the wet season (Oct-Apr), the tidal East Alligator ‘croc-filled’ river at Cahill’s Crossing, is usually impassable.

The community is well serviced through the school, West Arnhem Regional Council, health clinic, police station, Demed Association Inc. (servicing the homelands), post office agency, a variety of other visiting government and non-government agencies and the Prime Minister and Cabinet’s Government Engagement Coordinator and Indigenous Engagement Officer. Recreational facilities include a 25-metre swimming pool, fishing, boating, hiking, arts and craft, sports ovals, youth centre and basketball facilities. The major employment industries are education, ranger programs, community-owned supermarket, council services, the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) - station and meat works, service station, sports and social club, and Injalak Arts and Crafts Association.
Gunbalanya School – from community school to independent public school

Originally a community school, the school council was awarded independent public school status in 2016. In early 2017, the school board will be established (currently an interim Board). Half of its members will be family representatives. Classified as a very remote school, it is surrounded by the beautiful Arnhem land escarpment.

![Aerial view of Gunbalanya school.](image)

The school caters for students from birth to Year 12. The Child and Family Centre of the school operate a crèche, preschool and Families and First Teachers program (FAFT). Although bilingual education was introduced in the school in 1974, it was discontinued in 1984 due to a variety of administrative, social and cultural reasons.

In the dry season, there are a number of students who move to and from the homelands with their families. In the case of Kabulwarnamyo homelands, a shared partnership has been developed under a MoU between Gunbalanya School and the newly established Nawarddeken Academy, to support student movement between the two sites.
Please see [http://www.nawarddekenacademy.com/](http://www.nawarddekenacademy.com/) for more information about this Homeland School. A few photos from this school are pictured below.

Figure 9: Learning on Country at Nawarddeken Academy.

A flexible calendar has also been developed at Gunbalanya School to cater for seasonal conditions. The school year starts in early January, completes 22 weeks in the first semester, followed by a long recreational leave to allow families to work and live on country and conduct ceremony and funerals.

A number of programs are embedded within the school curriculum, including:

- Junior Rangers
- Music: Count Us In facilitated by Arts Empower! and NT Music School
- Work Readiness
- Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) Pathway
- Girls Academy
- Clontarf

The school enjoys considerable support from a range of industry partners – both local (e.g. West Arnhem Regional Council, Meat works, Demed Association, Rangers) and external (e.g. CDU, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), Menzies School of Health Research, GTNT, as well as interstate schools including Trinity Grammar, Billanock and Steiner). In future years, the school hopes to expand its performing arts and music curriculum.
Engaging key stakeholders

The following diagram shows the engagement of the Community Engagement Leader, the Mentor and Enrichment Officer and the Mentor and Engagement Officer from November 2014 to March 2016. Data for this diagram comes from the field reports of these WCE campus-based staff, for which all meetings (and attendances) have been recorded. Information about who participated in meetings, the organisation(s) that person/people were representing (if any) and dates were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet template designed for this purpose. This information was then organised, imported into ‘Gephi’ SNA software for the development of this diagram and for analysis by Dr Gretchen Ennis (Lecturer/Researcher in the School of Health at CDU), who was consulted to support this work. This WCE community engagement network data was gathered at three points in time:

- Mid November 2014 (to demonstrate initial engagement)
- End of July 2015 (mid-life of project)
- End of March 2016 (toward the final stages of the project)

This diagram does not record the engagement of the ARPNet researchers, the WCE Lead Community Researcher (2014-2015), the Community Liaison Officer (2016), the Teacher Liaison Leader (2014-2016) or any visits from the Program Manager and Project Coordinator. However, it provides an indication of the depth of engagement across the community.
Features of Gunbalanya engagement network between November 2014 to March 2016:
Number of organisations (blue dots) engaged with: 28
Number of individuals (orange dots) engaged with: 103

Figure 10: Social Network Analysis diagram showing engagements from November 2014 to March 2016.

The lines between the WCE campus-based staff (blue central dot), the organisations (blue dots) and the individuals (orange dots) who are affiliated with that organisation carry information about the number of times that specific person or group was engaged; the thicker the line, the greater the engagement. Organisations are named in the diagrams, but people are not. From this diagram, WCE engaged the most with: the Gunbalanya School, Child and Family Centre, West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC), the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, key community members, Injalak Arts and Craft. The least met with organisation was the health centre/clinic. Despite attempts to meet with health staff, competing work commitments appeared to limit engagement. However, WCE staff met with Regional Department of Health staff members in Darwin who oversee training needs of clinic staff.
By November 2016, WCE campus-based staff had engaged the following organisations/groups:

- Charles Darwin University (CDU)
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)
- NT Dept. Local and Regional Services
- Gunbalanya Community School (GCS)/ Independent Public School (IPS), including:
  - Child and Family Centre (CFC) - Families as First Teachers (FAFT), Crèche, Pre-School
  - Clontarf Foundation
  - Girls Academy
  - Remote School Attendance Strategy team
- West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC), including:
  - Youth Centre
  - Community Care Centre (Aged Care)
  - Local Authority Board (LAB) - also known as Local Authority Group
  - Women’s Safe House - previously managed by Katherine Women’s Crisis Centre (KWCC)
- TEAM Health
- Adjumarllarl Aboriginal Corporation
  - Adjumarllarl Store
  - Stronger Communities for Children
- Arrguluk Reference Group
- Gunbalanya Economic Development Aboriginal Corporation (GEDAC)
- Mengerr Aboriginal Corporation (MAC)
- Injalak Arts and Crafts Association
- Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS)
- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)
- Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA)
- Demed Association Inc.
- Adjumarllarl Rangers
- Njanjma Rangers
- Stronger Smarter Institute
- Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network (ARPNet)
- Gunbalanya Sports & Social Club (Club)
- Gunbalanya Health Centre (Clinic)
- JobFind, including:
  - Creative Industries
- Meatworks
- Gunbalanya Police Station
- Department of Trade, Business and Innovation
- Indigenous Contractors (INTRACT)
- Forward Thinking Consultants
- Northern Land Council
Local governance

The following local governance structures oversee the operations of some of the key agencies within the community. They include, but are not limited to:

- Adjumarllarl Aboriginal Corporation
- Karrimudrowk (Stronger Communities for Children committee) of the Adjumarllarl Aboriginal Corporation
- Arrguluk Reference Group
- (Interim) Gunbalanya School Board
- Arrmunbu Child and Family Centre Advisory Board
- Local Authority Group of the West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC)
- Housing Reference Group
- Injalak Arts and Crafts Association Inc. Board
- Gunbalanya Sports and Social Club Management Committee

Community engagement and research process

There were four phases to the community engagement and research process. Some phases operated at the same time.

Phase One (Oct 2014- Jan 2015):

- WCE team established – including the identification of Indigenous researchers, employed by CDU;
- Ethics approval received by WCE to conduct the research;
- Permit granted by Northern Land Council (NLC) for the WCE research team to access the remote community;
- Introductory visit to community – overview of HEPPP funding and the aims and objectives of the WCE initiative were shared;
- Key leaders and community organisations invited to participate in and support the initiative;
- Community interest expressed and local consent obtained to go ahead;
- ARPNet researchers identified and MoU/Service-Level Agreement (SLA) with RIEL developed, with funds attached.

Phase Two (Oct 2014-Oct 2016):

- ‘Whole of Community Engagement’ initiative explored as a ‘concept’ - What does ‘whole’ of community engagement look like? How would it be achievable? Who is ‘community’? For us, WCE meant engaging a representative sample of families across all clan groups, traditional owners, key community leaders, heads of agency and key operational staff from all services operating in community, visiting staff from external organisations, and any other individuals/organisations as directed by community.
- Model proposed through discussions between WCE staff, the Program Manager and ARPNet (see diagram below); ARPNet to conduct 3 waves of research * with Indigenous families and community members at grassroots level; WCE to conduct their own research cycles with service providers, key community leaders and other agencies; WCE to plan/act/reflect on the ARPNet findings as well as their own findings throughout the research journey to guide and inform each stage.
• It was decided that in the instance of the ‘same individual’ being consulted by both ARPNet and WCE, that it would be made clear what perspective they were being asked to provide – for example, as a parent (via ARPNet) or as board member (via WCE).
• Research process agreed: data collected, interpreted/analysed, actions taken in continuous, ongoing cycles.
• Research participants identified: ARPNet researchers and WCE researchers. Each of these agents conducted their own ‘plan, do, review’ cycles.
• In addition, community members who attended action planning workshops invited to conduct their own Participatory Action Research (PAR) cycles.
• In this way, the model was unique. All cycles operated in parallel, by multiple agents (people) collectively informing each and every stage of the research process.

*Due to the depth of research data collected by ARPNet in Wave 1, and challenges with the remaining timeframe, Waves 2 and 3 of ARPNet research did not go ahead as planned. WCE staff, however, continued with their PAR cycles, using wave 1 ARPNet data to inform their ongoing work.

Figure 11: West Arnhem participatory action research model.

**Guiding principles**
Throughout the WCE initiative, both the WCE and ARPNet research teams were guided by the principles developed by the wider WCE campus-based staff team. All agreed that communication (external and internal) would be:
• Thoughtful – this will involve adopting a consultative and strengths-based approach; communication will be timely, consistent and regular.
• Genuine – this will involve taking time to establish relationships with community leaders and families that are built on trust and respect; expectations will be carefully managed; communication will be community focused, inclusive and transparent.
• Meaningful – this will involve clear and concise messaging (not too academic); with the support of community leaders communication will be delivered in local language, wherever possible.

• Ethically appropriate – this will involve a commitment to community engagement and decision-making that is guided by national and global Indigenous ethical frameworks; this also involves acknowledgement and ownership of intellectual property.

• Culturally respectful (in both approach and delivery) – this will involve an awareness of matriarchal and patriarchal decision-making processes, which will ensure responsiveness to local cultural practices; community leaders will be adequately remunerated for sharing and contributing Indigenous knowledges.

• Participatory – this will involve project partners working collaboratively (‘with’ not ‘on’ or ‘about’) to enhance a sense of ownership and minimise feelings of disempowerment; this will ensure that outcomes are directed by, and benefit, the local community

• Considerate of, and responsive to, first languages – this will involve honouring primary/first languages; the use of trained interpreters will also be supported.

• Underpinned by two-way learning approaches – this will involve engaging with both Indigenous and Mainstream/Western (academic) knowledge systems equally, with a view of supporting the co-creation of knowledge and aspiration development.


• WCE met with key individuals and organisations for one week in every month, recording data collected, by facilitating meetings, key interviews, workshop activities, making observations, taking field notes, photos, videos and audio recordings.

• In between each visit, WCE staff regularly maintained engagement with community contacts via the following methods: phone calls, meetings in Darwin, Facebook Messenger. WCE staff also shared back information to WCE partners, as appropriate.

In May 2015, WCE funded five days of ARPNet training at a camp on the East Alligator River. All ARPNet researchers, who were interested in being involved in the WCE research, were invited to participate. Due to a number of issues beyond our control (funerals, events in community, timing when ARPNet Training Coordinator and Project Coordinator were available to conduct this work) numbers were more limited than originally proposed (up to fifteen senior community members and youth). Two very young females (under sixteen year olds), one male and four female youth (in their twenties), and one senior female (a total of nine) engaged in this training opportunity.

Figure 12: ARPNet training at East Alligator camp.
The training was delivered by Dr Bev Sithole and Hmalan Hunter-Xenie from ARPNet. Three WCE staff members (Community Engagement Leader, Mentor and Engagement Officer, Evaluation Manager) attended to provide some background of the aims and objectives of WCE and to discuss and reflect on which of the ARPNet research tools might best fit with the work proposed.

• Arising out of conversations among the West Arnhem WCE staff and WCE campus-based staff about the value of bringing together the Top End and Central Desert WCE Indigenous researchers together, a Remote Indigenous Researcher Forum (RIRF) was suggested to all six communities and other Indigenous research organisations across the NT. WCE funding was approved and the forum took place on CDU Casuarina campus (Aug, 2015); Indigenous research ethical protocols, methodologies, and visions were shared.

• ARPNet researchers conducted Wave 1 of their research (Nov 2015-May 2016) - see Appendices I-III for a summary of ARPNet research findings.

• ARPNet asked five key questions (listed below in bold), using a range of participatory research tools (taken from the resource entitled: ‘The ARPnet DillyBag by Dr Bevlyne Sithole: A practical field guide to participatory and other research tools for use by Aboriginal Research Practitioners in Australia’). A representative sample of family members– taking gender, age and clan into account – were invited to participate in the research.

  What do you think of higher education?
  (Do you know what that is? Would you let your kids get higher education?)

  What is both ways education?
  (Is there Bininj education? Is this different from Balanda education?)

  What kind of education do you want for your children?

  Is getting an education important for Aboriginal people?
  (What is education for, why get it? Is getting an education important to you? What happens to you mob after you get an education?)

  What 3 things are important for you about getting an education?

Figure 13: Preferences for different types of education.
Figure 14: Distribution of research participants by gender and age.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Gunbalanya</th>
<th>Old people</th>
<th>Mature people</th>
<th>Young people</th>
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<td>Bininj (men)</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Daluk (women)</td>
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<td>Bininj (men)</td>
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<td>Daluk (women)</td>
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<td>Daluk (women)</td>
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</table>

- Due to constraints of time, other ARPNet commitments, and the good quality and volume of data provided to WCE following Wave 1, it was decided not to go ahead with Waves 2 and 3 of ARPNet research.
- MoU was revised, ARPNet research report was finalised.
- Two school council members were invited to participate in a Joint School Council Gathering in Yirrkala – which brought together council members across the six WCE sites to discuss educational priorities and concerns (May, 2016).
- In Sept 2016, an interagency workshop in community was facilitated to develop a Draft Community Education Action Plan based on discussions about the ARPNet research findings [see Appendices IV and V]. All organisations listed in the section entitled Key stakeholders were invited. Despite keen interest being expressed, some staff members were unable to attend for a variety of reasons, apologies were sent, and requests made for draft action plans and reports to be provided back to them to circulate to staff. Twenty-one staff across eight agencies attended. The draft plan was then circulated to all key stakeholders (whether they attended or not) to edit or add to the plan.
- Between September and November 2016, WCE research conducted with youth (following the suggestion made during a meeting with Arrguluk Reference Group members) to gain their perspectives on their education and to discuss their plans for their future pathways/dreams/aspirations [See Appendix VI for the project outline] and below for more information.
- WCE in collaboration with CDU International Graduate Centre of Education organised a two-day Remote Indigenous Youth Summit prior to a two-day Indigenous Leaders Conference (Nov, 2016). Emerging youth leaders identified by WARC Youth Centre and Team Health staff were invited to participate.
- WCE staff participated in three Career’s expos - two at the Gunbalanya school (November 2014-2015) for middle and senior school students and one as a WCE-led collaboration with WCE partners (CDU, Menzies, BIITE, NAILSMA) in November 2016 – providing relevant higher education pathway information to CDP participants from the Gunbalanya community.
Youth perspectives on Education: film project

Figure 15: Conducting the youth perspectives film project.

The film project was a collaborative effort between WCE, Team Health staff and the Youth Centre (WARC), with the support of community-based film maker Curran Brown. Unfortunately, the first shoot started but was rained out. A follow up plan was put into place and individual times were set up to connect with other youth in community when and where it was suitable and comfortable for them. A total of nine youth participated in the project (five female, four male). The youth were given the option of speaking in their first language (Kunwinkju) or English. Captions in English were added to the clips at editing stage, as appropriate. The final clips are available via a YouTube weblink, which is located on WCE website: https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/communities/gunbalanya/gunbalanya-youth-perspectives-on-education/

See also the following web links for more information about the project:


Figure 16: Youth involved in the youth perspectives film project, clockwise from top left: Angelo, James, Kirsty and Vicky.
Phase 4 (Oct-Dec 2016)

- The following evaluation questions were circulated to key Gunbalanya community individuals and reviewed by WCE [See Appendix VII]:
  - What has been the most valuable part of the WCE Initiative for you or your organisation?
  - What could have been done better/differently in the WCE Initiative?
  - What changes/impact have you seen in your community as a result of the WCE Initiative?
  - What will you/your organisation change as a result of being part of the WCE Initiative?
  - Any other feedback?
- An additional anonymous Survey Monkey evaluation tool was circulated to key stakeholders also, to be reviewed by the WCE Evaluation Coordinator.
- WCE work to be presented at conferences (Nov/Dec).
- Gunbalanya WCE Research and Evaluation Report finalised.
- Hard copies of reports to be mailed out to key agencies and individuals to distribute in community (Dec).

Summary of research experience

Illustrated below is an upwards spiral representing the knowledge that is built up over time – read from the bottom up - through PAR cycles of planning-action-reflection, as represented also in the tree trunk of the ‘Five Rights’ on page 22.

17 Knowledge built over time!
16 Future planning (field notes). And so on….
15 Collaborative writing (reports).
14 Reflections (notes, audio recordings).
13 Workshops delivered.
12 Workshops planned with community (workshop presentation slides and resources).
11 Findings reported by ARPNet (report).
10 Reflection and debrief (audio recordings, field visit reports), ongoing.
9 Data analysed (audio recordings, field notes), ongoing.
8 Data collected (field visit reports, field notes, audio and video recordings, workshop notes, emails, Facebook messages), ongoing.
7 Research process refined: Wave 1 only; WCE to continue working with service providers, key stakeholders and community leaders/TOs.
6 Wave 1 ARPNet research conducted.
5 Analysis and reflection.
4 Research approach designed.
3 ‘Whole of Community Engagement’ defined.
2 ARPNet training delivered.
1 Issue defined: PAR exploring higher education pathways.

Figure 17: Diagram demonstrating the research process.
Key partnerships

- ARPNet (Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network) through a MoU and a service level agreement, under the auspices of RIEL. This has involved ARPNet engaging a team of Aboriginal researchers to research with Indigenous individuals, families, Elders and young people across a number of clan groups – see prior section on research process for more details.
- WCE staff conducted monthly consultations with all key stakeholders – listed in earlier section - to develop and build partnerships with all of these agencies.
- WCE staff facilitated workshops with interagency staff to identify actions that can be taken to best support Indigenous higher education pathways. Existing partnerships with key individuals and organisations were strengthened through this process, and opportunities identified.
- Throughout the initiative, WCE campus-based staff shared research findings and information about key activities with the WCE partners, and invited them to collaborate and participate, where and when appropriate.
- NAILSMA remained actively involved with land and sea management education and training activities in the region, and joined up with WCE staff on two visits to community.
- RIEL continued to progress the development and piloting of fire curriculum materials and training in the region. WCE staff attended fire curriculum meetings in Darwin, where applicable.
- BIITE continued to support education and training in the region, and provided advice and infrastructure support (accommodation/vehicle use) on occasion.

Key achievements

In reflecting on the research work conducted over the past two years, the following achievements were identified:

Our community engagement process

The way that we have engaged with community:

“In our blood is a code of rules: respect is the most powerful thing in Indigenous communities. The code of rules, we understand that when we approach, we approach with manners ... you’ve got to talk to the people in the right place and the right people at the right time, and the right way, and respect the communities. This should always be happening. Sometimes ... those people in other places. Well it’s not the right place for them to consult with... making sure that they’re available, then you can go and make contact with these people... we asked the people ... have they got time to sit down and talk about it. If they say, “Come back later,” well, we take that opportunity to come back later and work with this group... if you’re going with your manners and approaching the way that you want to consult with a person and talk to him, you want to have a good yarn with him, to sit down and give you his story, he will relax, he knows. He knows that you want to have a good conversation with him and he wants to hear your stories, where you’re coming from .... So two-ways... Indigenous learning ... as well.”

WCE Mentor and Engagement Officer
The Five Rights: Right People, Right Time, Right Place, Right Language, Right Way
(This title is borrowed from a resource developed from a Community Governance Training program in Maningrida presented at the Garma Forum in 2004 by JET Centre board & staff in Maningrida’)

The following illustration was developed in conversations between the Community Engagement Leader and the Mentor and Engagement Officer about the process involved in undertaking the research in an Indigenous education policy environment. This image tells a story about past and present research practices and future visions for Bininj people. It captures the important recognition of the skills and knowledge that exist already within Bininj people and the impact of external influences on Aboriginal communities. Done the ‘right way’, research can empower Indigenous people, if given the opportunity to drive the research agenda ‘the Bininj way’ following many unwritten rules and protocols (some of which are captured by metaphors contained in this image).

Figure 18: Illustration of the process of undertaking research in an Indigenous education policy environment. This image is strictly not to be reproduced without gaining prior consent from the authors of this report.

1. **Bush yam** – researchers with the skills to know how to dig up the yam (the stories from community) and the knowledge about when is the right time to harvest the yam (to do the research). When you harvest the yam correctly, you make sure you dig up the yam with the whole root system (the whole story, big picture), not collecting only a small part of the yam (a part of the story). Also, you always leave some of the yam behind (take the stories back to community) so that the yam can regenerate and grow (self-determined actions can be taken).

2. **Grassroots and root system** – the research is conducted with the Bininj families and the communities at the grass roots by ARPNet, then these stories are shared/fed back up through the rest of the system (tree trunk) – to local community, to WCE partners, to the wider community.

3. **Research cycles** – continuous feedback loops - from the families/community members through ARPNet to WCE campus-based staff, from WCE through to community-based workshops with teachers, service providers, TOs and Board members and others. The information was continually shared and knowledge built up over time as we did so.
4. **Leaves/seeds** – ideas that are germinating, actions that are being identified.

5. **Seedlings** - actions that are being taken by community members to strengthen education pathways.

6. **Busy bees** – WCE researchers, sharing the ideas and passing the messages on (pollen), leaving some behind, fertilising the seedlings along the way.

7. **Sun** – the resources needed; ‘Right People, Right Time, Right Place, Right Language, Right Way* to sustain this work (ecosystem). Without the right support from the government and elsewhere, it will dry up (the work stops). It is like a big smiling face – the journey is going in the right direction.

8. **Cyclone** – rapid changing policy environment and government changes that impacts the environment we find ourselves in.

9. **4WD vehicle** – outside influences (programs, people, laws, regulations) that are not naturally found in the environment (community) impact it.

10. **Buffalo** – both the 4WD and the buffalo make tracks (creates issues and problems) and erodes the country (impacts on Indigenous people - needs and rights are not being met). It costs money to eradicate these issues once they have been created.

11. **Rain water** – natural resources (skills and knowledge) that exist in the community.

12. **Billabong** – when nature runs its course, the water fills the billabong it nurtures and sustains the environment. These natural resources flood out, if there is erosion, taking the water down a different path that Indigenous people cannot cope with or manage within their existing knowledge systems.

13. **Ripple effect** – if ideas are allowed to come at the right time in the right way in accordance with the seasons, the ripples (information) can flow in and out, shared with everyone.

14. **Rainbow** – symbolises the research journey, the education pathways of community members and the visions and dreams of the children, youth, Elders, families. Pride in our children, our organisations, our school. When there is the right combination of factors in place (5 Rights), the pathway shines bright and we are happy. We are happier when we are all working together, connected and supporting each other, providing accessible, inclusive education pathways; bright futures.

15. **Bush fire** – regenerates the plants and supports the animals, is a symbol of a healthy landscape, provides healthy food, supports birth and rebirth. A natural system (respecting Indigenous knowledges) supports self-determined futures for Indigenous people.

Our partnership with the Gunbalanya school. As illustrated in the SNA diagram (on page 11), we engaged the most with the school, including the Child and Family staff. The leadership team supported our work throughout the initiative and invited us to run the interagency workshop at the school - “to inform the Business Plan of the School... you can invite anyone you want” (Principal). The timing of the workshop was coordinated with a visit from Forward Thinking Consultants who were supporting the school with their transition to an IPS. The consultants attended this workshop. After the workshop, WCE staff members were invited to meet with the consultants to discuss the new proposals for school governance.

In addition to monthly visits and meetings with individual service providers, WCE staff brought service providers together around the common concern of ‘education’ – to workshop with heads of agency and key operational staff. During this workshop, participants were invited to develop action plans to strengthen higher education pathways in Gunbalanya based on the ARPNet and WCE research findings to date. The aim of the interagency workshop was to facilitate opportunities for different agencies to share information and to identify areas that they could work on together – for example, Gunbalanya school
and JobFind discussed possibilities for work experience opportunities to be provided to senior school students: “The feedback workshop was particularly insightful and provided food for thought regarding how we can work with the community, the school and young school leavers...”

Traditional Owners/Board Members (e.g. Adjumarlarll), Government Engagement Coordinator and Indigenous Engagement Officer invited us to attend meetings with them every visit we made to community and they made regular phone and email contact with us, both in community and in Darwin if they were visiting. They consistently showed great interest in working closely with us: “the education about what you are trying to do and trying to achieve within the community and how it can be available was an education.”

Our visits were the occasion to

- Provide a platform to listen and respond to community voices about their perspectives, experiences and ideas about education – “first demonstrated investment in consulting with Aboriginal families”.
- Collaborate with partners – e.g. NAILSMA (e.g. sharing discussions about Outdoor Education and Tourism at the school, Ranger Program training needs); BIITE (e.g. mentoring of Child and Family staff enrolled in or thinking about a higher education course; supporting enrolment, supporting tutoring needs, liaising with BIITE lecturing staff. Passing on relevant information to BIITE campus-based staff, when requested by BIITE or community members. Connecting community members to relevant BIITE staff for course advice).

Figure 19: WCE West Arnhem and Forward Thinking Teams talking up remote Indigenous education.
Mentoring

“When they heard about our visits and our work, about our involvement in the community engagement, they started to come up to us, they started to wait around when we got to Maningrida or Oenpelli, there were people saying, “I’ve been waiting for you guys,” and that expectation that I see in people’s faces, it’s real and they’re looking for somebody. They’re looking for those pathways as well. So that’s very, very strong sharing and learning together and connecting with the key Indigenous leaders, people who work in the different areas and belong to the different governance areas ... Making a connection with those people and talking... Sharing our stories and learning together was a really powerful way of getting people more motivated, more interested in following up education pathways... They were sharing their visions and concerns as well.”

During the length of our work in Gunbalanya we mentored over twenty community members to support their educational aspirations (e.g. Child and Family staff enrolled in higher education).

Through mentoring we were able to support the community to build a picture of what they want in terms of their education to feed back to the system – including discussions about homelands education, ‘both ways’ education, boarding school education. Some early feedback at the end of 2016 provided by stakeholders highlights this:

“More confidence, especially in the recent graduates in talking about their pathways and what they need.”
“People talking about pathways”
“Greater exposure to career pathways”

We also facilitated a workshop with twenty one interagency staff to access family and community perspectives on education in a workshop where the theme of ‘mentoring’ was one key issue highlighted and discussed.

We supported the community to identify actions to strengthen education pathways. In the words of one workshop participant: “In my opinion, and having not seen a programme like this before in action on the ground, the valuable thing that I have seen is the start of a pathway and an education about what higher education can do, and [how it can] be available for people within community.”

We provided opportunities for students to celebrate their educational achievements and share their journeys with others (e.g. film project with nine graduates/school leavers to learn about youth perspectives on their education).

We also made sure to engage in activities to promote ‘Uni’ or higher education as an option for community members through the sharing of information, resources and connections with relevant staff – e.g. WCE researchers requested by Maningrida community to provide higher education pathways resources and information for senior school students from Gunbalanya, Milingimbi and Ramingining (as well as Maningrida) at a two-day Career’s Expo, funded by the Community Champions Program and WCE, Nov 2016. WCE has coordinated and part-funded the participation of CDU, Menzies, BIITE and NAILSMA staff members. 7 staff attended from this collaborative group. We raised awareness about CDU and BIITE and what ‘Uni’ and other higher education providers can offer (approx. 60 students across the two Career’s Days as well as the Career’s Expo in Maningrida).
Another aspect of our mentoring was to provide professional development for staff in key community organisations – through meetings and workshops – “it was an education for them” – giving them access to educational experiences and learning opportunities that they previously were not getting. In addition, funding provided by WCE enabled ARPNet to deliver training to build the research capacity of its newer members.

**Acknowledging, valuing and embracing complexity and cultural differences**

“Our [Binin] relationships and our aspirations across the communities, that is most important, the reuniting of our relationships... Before, there was a really good uniting when there were less impacts, but when the settlement got bigger and bigger until today, it’s impacted ... different clan groups - had good connections, those relationships were a very, very strong bond and they were very, very proud of themselves across different clan groups in our community, but nowadays, sometimes that relationship goes down and they need to rebuild that relationship again because of a lot of things happening in this life. Some people are moving out and all that, it’s happening all the time.”

The WCE staff employed brought together both ‘toolboxs’ of Indigenous and non-Indigenous skills and knowledge. Both were valued equally, views were shared, and complexity explored and acknowledged.

WCE staff understand that Indigenous people, like other ‘groups’ in society, are not a one singular (homogenous) group – not everyone is the same, nor do they share the same perspectives on education.

The research exposes the varied viewpoints of Indigenous people about education.

WCE staff worked with cultural differences and complexity by maintaining a respectful, open-minded, flexible attitude and approach.
Governance, leadership, and management

In discussion with key community members, it was decided not to establish an additional governance structure for the initiative, but rather to work through existing governance structures such as heads of agency meetings and meetings with boards.

Over five hundred meetings were held with individuals or small groups across all key organisations, with over two hundred people (in addition to the ARPNet research conducted) over the two years, recorded in SNA spreadsheets and field visit reports.

Through workshops, twenty one key staff members from eight key agencies were brought together as well as ten board members/traditional owners, connecting them around the shared concern of education (see http://eepurl.com/clVRd5).

This was identified by some to support clan as well as mainstream leadership and governance – “We need to organise the [Indigenous education] action group as soon as possible so that they can work with any agency within the community.”


During this trip, one key youth participant from Gunbalanya was interviewed by the ABC about his perspectives on child removals – see: http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-11-10/young-leaders-call-for-change-after-child-removals-report/8011018.

Two school council representatives attended the Joint School Council Gathering (Yirrkala) and contributed as a signatory to a ‘collective school council statement on remote Indigenous education’. 
Understanding the systems and policies where students and educational staff navigate was an important step in our journey to enable us to provide the best support and facilitate our research activities. We contributed to it by:

- Building knowledge at the local systems level in order to support learners (e.g. education pathway resources and information provided at career expos; family and community perspectives on education shared through interagency workshops to inform Gunbalanya IPS Business Plan).
- Participating in other CDU research – the ‘Bininj Kunwok online learning pilot’ - and in doing so, contributed to curriculum and course offerings. See [http://bininjgunwok.org.au/](http://bininjgunwok.org.au/).
- Creating opportunities for the research to inform academic and public policy decision making (including the Pre-Tertiary Success course, and the new Strategic Plan of the University, 2015-2025 – ‘Connect, Discover, Grow’) through key meetings with staff and participation in focus groups. See [http://www.cdu.edu.au/sites/default/files/strategic-plan.pdf](http://www.cdu.edu.au/sites/default/files/strategic-plan.pdf) for more information.
- Contributing to other research and engagement efforts, at the request of other WCE partner/researchers – e.g. Menzies research, Rheumatic Heart Disease PhD research, BIITE Indigenous Education Implementation Evaluation for the NT Department of Education.
- Sharing our methodological approach with postgraduate researchers (both PhD and Masters), to support reflections on their own research methodology – “One of the main limitations of my previous work (as a self-study) was the absence of the considered voice of Indigenous people as co researchers or participants... the model you described is something that would fit nicely in as an example of methodology aligned more closely with priorities of the community and also as repositioning indigenous people as subjects as opposed to objects of research.” In this way, the WCE research contributes more broadly to the field of Indigenous education research.
• Building the Indigenous researcher profile within and outside of CDU through the employment of Indigenous researchers in the initiative, the RIRF, Research ‘Us’ and participation in a number of national conferences this year, presented by West Arnhem WCE team in Darwin, Adelaide and Melbourne - “great presentation and lovely to see the whole integrated and considered approach.” See also References and Resources for more information.

• Responding to requests from other key Departmental staff to learn about our community engagement approach – for example, to support a new Family-Nurse Partnership program to be delivered in West Arnhem communities of Gunbalanya and Maningrida.

Key lessons

Below are listed some key lessons learnt 1) through the process of implementing the research, and 2) from the community members who engaged in the research itself. In addition, Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model is presented as a useful consideration; a systems theoretical framework that illustrates the complexity of the pursuit of further education in remote Indigenous contexts.

Lessons learnt through the process of implementation

The location of WCE staff and the limitations on the WCE funding and timeframe impacted upon outcomes achievable. In the words of one Traditional Owner, “How can you engage the community when you are not here? You should stay here”. WCE staff living in Darwin or on an outstation and working in, out and across two remote WCE communities was hugely challenging.

Negotiating the Service Level Agreement with RIEL and MoU with ARPNet was complex and took several months to finalise. There were moments of confusion between ARPNet staff and WCE staff about their roles and focus, and the location of key ARPNet staff (overseas, interstate, or in other communities) at times made it difficult to resolve matters quickly and easily. A great deal of flexibility and professionalism was required to navigate this partnership.

Concern continues to be raised at a community and WCE partnership level, as to how and whether this work is going to continue, given the HEPPP-funding of the WCE initiative ends in 2016 – “if we are going to be serious about doing our work and achieving and ticking boxes and kicking goals, or doing however you want to describe it, then such things as what we have been doing need to continue.” However, it is hoped that the draft action plan will be useful to guide continued discussions at the community-level, and that the information arising out of the work that has been passed through to WCE partners, will continue to initiate and support existing efforts to strengthen higher education pathways for remote Indigenous people.

Very little time was available for writing up the final report, following the final community visit, and due to word limitations, the report provides a summary of research activities and outcomes. Despite the funding ending, the authors of the report hope to write and publish papers exploring the methodology and some of the key issues and recommendations in greater detail in 2017.
Lessons learnt through the research with community

There are many issues identified by families in the ARPNet research that require attention and due consideration - “Working with families is key” (see also Appendix II) -

Education (both Balanda and Bininj) appears to be a priority for most remote Indigenous families and community members (see Appendix I).

The drafting of a Community Education Action Plan was beneficial, shared back with key agencies (who participated and who were unable to attend). Interagency staff are talking about higher education pathways and some, have identified key actions for change. Some service providers have defined shared actions to strengthen education pathways (see Appendix V).

Mentoring relationships established with community members – past, current and potential higher education students has been valuable – demonstrated by continue d discussions with community members about their interest to pursue further study.

Many Indigenous people view ‘society’ and the education and government systems as problematic, where government position Indigenous people as having a problem - ‘a gap’ – that needs fixing/filling, without taking into account due consideration of the ever-changing policy context (in education, as well as employment, housing and so on) – “Government changing, future is coming back to old days, if kids not going to school, the parents not getting money. The parents are forcing kids to go back to school, same as in the old days.”

Indigenous knowledge systems add value and benefit the education of Indigenous learners in the mainstream; the maintenance of first languages in education supports the acquisition of English language and literacy – “as an Indigenous teacher, I teach in English, but I check back with the kids that they have understood what I taught them in language.”

Language, literacy and numeracy skills development in English is a priority and needs to be embedded within ‘on the job training’ and accredited courses- so that Indigenous people can move into roles, and up through roles into more senior positions of control in organisations (see Appendix I-III) – e.g. “... you got to learn and get more educated, get more numeracy and literacy, to me young kids got to go to school so they can get their education. But they are not getting educated enough and they are not going to get any skills by not going to school, it is for them and their kids and (for them) not to let the Balanda take over this community, they got to think about that....

Families are choosing to send their children interstate to attend boarding schools at secondary level, despite the challenges this presents: “...in Year 6-7, I was getting good marks, I was getting A and Bs when I was in high school here, but then I went to boarding school, I was getting A, B, C, that educational system im (it is) different system, it was different for me, got me confused and lost...” More research is required to understand how best to support young people transition in and out of boarding school and the community.

Community members are talking about educational pathways, for example, the school bus has the following text printed on it - “Turtle steps” – “Are you on Track?” and the school staff have been working with students in recent years to develop educational goals to support the visions for their future careers.
Situating higher education within the broader system

Ecological systems theory – see diagram below – provides a useful framework in which to locate individuals in context.

Education appears to be viewed by Indigenous people as a ‘collective’ rather than an ‘individual’ pursuit; and as such, it involves and is impacted upon by the ‘microsystem’ (e.g. family), the ‘exosystem’ (extended family, School Board, workplace e.g. school) and the ‘macrosystem’ (Balanda law; Bininj language, history and culture; socio-economic conditions).

Education, in this way, cannot be viewed in isolation of other social and economic conditions – for example employment, housing, health, and safety.

Future directions (recommendations)

The following combined recommendations arose out of discussions with service providers, traditional owners and key community leaders in meetings and the interagency workshop, as well as WCE researcher reflections on family and community perspectives on education. See also Appendix III for ‘Recommendations’ highlighted by families in the ARPNet research.

It is the belief of the authors, that attention needs to focus on changes required at all levels of the ‘system’ – macrosystem, exosystem, and microsystem, not just at the individual level – in order to strengthen higher education pathways for remote Indigenous communities. Systems theory thus provides a useful framework in which to situate these recommendations, and as such, they have been organised according to the levels described in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model. The recommendations listed are both broad and specific, and listed in no particular order of priority.
Recommendation 1: Macrosystem (e.g. History, Laws, Culture, Economic system, Social conditions)

- An attitudinal shift is required from a deficit to a strengths-based focus, reflected in policy and practice, to create better education outcomes for Indigenous people.
- Coordination across Territory Departments and between State and Federal Departments is required, particularly between the NT DoE and Commonwealth Department of Education to advance Indigenous education in the best interests of remote Indigenous people.
- Partnership within and between Departments is required as education, employment, housing and so on are all issues that are linked.
- Policy-makers to involve key Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to design deliver and evaluate education policies and practices, in order that the particular issues experienced in remote Australia are reflected and addressed.
- More investment in homelands education is required – where young people can connect better to two-way learning opportunities, feel safe, access better health and wellbeing, connection to country, balance family and cultural commitments, reduce access to drugs and alcohol, and so on - “Outstation education is what we want.”
- More Indigenous politicians working across all government levels and working together with their non-Indigenous colleagues, to inform policy development, and practice.
- More funding and resources given to Aboriginal-controlled organisations to support their own education and training agendas.

Recommendation 2: Exosystem (e.g. Neighbourhoods, School board, Extended family, Parent’s work environment, Mass media)

- For heads of agency and operational staff to progress, monitor and further develop the actions drafted in the Community Education Action Plan.
- For community organisations to foster a culture of genuine ‘two way’ mentoring in their workplaces – to support intercultural communication, Bininj-Balanda knowledge and skill acquisition, relationships and partnerships – employees working with and alongside each other, ‘learning together’, equally valuing mainstream and Indigenous knowledges.
- For induction programs to be developed that all employees who are new to community are required to complete (e.g. new teachers) – that teach individuals about the community context, to support the building of relevant cultural knowledge and to provide organisations with a mechanism to build relationships and support people in the most appropriate ways.
- To continue interagency workshops – to support service providers to work together and to monitor and evaluate the progress of these actions taken.
- Place-based community engagement positions required – to maintain CDU presence (or at least a minimum of five-ten years) to build good community understanding and knowledge about University and higher education.
- More engagement with remote Indigenous communities about education is required through initiatives like WCE, over a sustained period of time.
- This community engagement is required in order to continue existing relationships/partnerships (between WCE, WCE partners, government, community) – to strengthen and maintain education pathways.
• For the Gunbalanya community and the WCE partners to receive feedback – a response – from the Commonwealth Department of Education - on the WCE reports and to come out and talk to the communities; to continue the cycle: “We [researchers] were sent here to do a job. What is the point of the research if there is no follow up? Why invest in education research this way, if the government is not going to respond and take actions based on these recommendations?”
• For the WCE partners to provide feedback on the reports to the communities.
• For the Commonwealth Department of Education (DoE) to pass this information on to the NT DoE and other Ministers to talk to them about the recommendations and actions to be taken.
• Governance support, training and Indigenous and non-Indigenous champions required to support the education agenda.
• For Gunbalanya community leaders (e.g. Adjumarllarl Aboriginal Corporation and School Board) to sit down together and invite key politicians and ministers along to community to reflect on the report and WCE work together.
• For NLC to consider their role and responsibility in supporting Bininj education pathways, within a community development function.
• For the WARC to review how far they have got with their newly implemented training program with embedded Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) and to work with staff to meet their training needs.
• For the two key educational institutions in the Northern Territory – CDU and BIITE - to review their remote VET delivery in community and to work together with service providers and community members to identify the best ways to support Indigenous learners to access and participate in further study opportunities.
• For CDU and BIITE to continue their advocacy with the government regarding the funding and provision of community-based training and education.
• For community organisations, CDU and BIITE to consider co-funding remote trainer roles in community, and scholarships for identified individuals.

Recommendation 3: Microsystem (e.g. Family, Peers, Siblings)

More engagement with families required – to build trust and knowledge of what school and other agencies can provide in terms of education and training opportunities for local people.

Recommendation 4: Individual (e.g. child)

More consultation with youth required – to build a better understanding of the reasons why young people are not attending school (as a means to better address school attendance issues) – e.g. funding the Youth perspective on education film project, and to gain better perspectives on boarding school experiences to support transition of students from community to urban school settings – e.g. youth attending the newly established Melbourne Indigenous Transition School (MITS) – see http://www.mits.vic.edu.au/.
Data sources

- Conference post-it evaluation, Nov 2016.
- Facebook messages (various), Nov 2014-Dec 2016.
- Gunbalanya interagency workshop reflections, 14 September 2016.
- Gunbalanya school data profile (provided by Gunbalanya IPS).
- Interagency workshop notes, held in Gunbalanya on 14 September 2016.
- ‘Life Journeys: Pathways to Higher Education in Gunbalanya’, report provided by ARPNet to WCE in May 2016.
- Social Network Analysis spreadsheets (Oct 2014-March 2016)
- Whole of Community Engagement initiative: Developing pathways into higher education for remote Indigenous communities:
  - https://remotengagetoedu.com.au and
- WIRE Edition 354, 28 October, ‘Higher Education Pathways Explored’:
References


APPENDIX I

Selection of quotes from families and community, recorded by ARPNet

“Government changing, future is coming back to old days, if kids not going to school, the parents not getting money. The parents are forcing kids to go back to school, same as in the old days.”

“I wanted to go to Kormilda College but dropped out because my grandfather wanted me to go to ceremony, I got Bininj education, big mob Bininj education, but western not much. I wanna try to make it both, wanna build myself up and have it both ways, wanna make it equal.”

“Yeah, I would let me girls do more studying so they can come back and help, and also they can do Balanda one, study and our Bininj knowledge. They can come back and learn our culture way, they can go and study.”

“Biggest mob been to school but no job. Many of them been to school but don’t work I know. Lots of them young people, no school, no job, lots of young people walking around at night, some never went to school, no job, just wanna sit at home.”

“gambling, smoking ganja or running around here all the time arguing…”

“yes, I want to do further study”

“to learn a bit more education and some ideas”

“Yes to get good job – ranger, doctor or something, or policeman”

“yes, keep on moving up”

“little bit of education then job….get little bit training then get job…treadmill going nowhere”

“before (during old time) everyone attend school, there was more discipline and everything was running good. When you see like today, those kids have more but they not interested in school, but other things than education, they interested in something else, more interested in money to buy grog and ganja, they need more money, that’s all they really want, government giving them money, spoiling them that’s why, there is no money, they want ganja, but mother lose it in card game…….Balanda stick with it, they keep going till they find good job… but our mob, they get half way there, they just pull out, say it’s not interesting…”

“They have BIITE, I think some people go to BIITE for studies, they fly to Darwin and do studies there. To me it’s good, but I don’t know about other people. For me I would like to do studies to help TOs [Traditional Owners] because I am a TO, and I like to help TOs and other young people like me. Because some of my family are not really well educated, and to help them work for this community…..”

“….Most of them (young people) have no school, no job, a lot of young people walk around all night. Some never went to school, they have no job, they just wanna sit at home.”
“We see Balanda managing, we should see Bininj managing or helping. Bininj should go with him, Balanda should be teaching him not going on his own.”

“Yes they call you balanda.”
“Yes they say you learning more balanda way.”
“Yes you are mixing culture.”
“I think some Balanda be alright (are okay) when get together with Bininj. Not just all Balanda, it is good to learn both ways. We need to get more balanda education to help us (ourselves). Some Bininj don’t get us when we talk, they have to get balanda to do it.”
“Bininj people look at you got (you have) more balanda in you... Because you will have more power and influence I guess.”
“I have seen them when they come back, they don’t wanna talk language, that sort of thing, only talk back in English, sometimes they don’t wanna attend ceremony....”

“... in Year 6-7 I was getting good marks, I was getting A and Bs when I was in high school here, but then I went to boarding school, I was getting A, B, C, that educational system im (it is) different system, it was different for me, got me confused and lost..... I didn’t know how to do that, maths was hard, after completing year 12. I went back to country... graduated on how to party ..... Now I have big mob certificates, conservation and land management from BiTE, welding, small motors, fire arm, weed control, bush fire, and chainsaws. I am not too sure how education helps you. I went from A student to D, E and F, it was a cultural shock, now I am sending my son to a school away from here..... I think it is better, I am not too sure about the quality of school here .... I am not happy because I don’t have enough education, it is never enough still learning all the time, an ongoing thing – still getting that education all day of the week.”

“... in senior school my grades dropped to Ds and Fs because the maths science and English, social studies were a lot different than in our high school. It was different from top to bottom. I spent year 11 and 12 failing because the teachers there didn’t help me through the maths, wood work, metal work especially with the maths. Once we did a market game we had to choose our market, buy and sell things. But our teacher came and he just sat there looking at the sums and just said do it, he didn’t explain anything. Whole two years I used to sit outside his class for a whole hour. After that I left and started working .... I ended up going back to Edith Cowen to do Aboriginal Studies and I failed in that. Just did work, work, work and didn’t think of going back to higher education. Now in my 40s I am thinking of going back to University.....”

“I want to go to university but it is too hard because of money problems and who would give us funding to go. They don’t want to leave this community and they don’t connect with others from outside. If government give us money it we can go forward, but we get homesick, too far from home some kids think about their families...”

“... We want a little bit of both, sometimes now our kids get a little bit of both – art and language, and there is culture week, the school is not teaching enough Bininj, they are learning more from home.”

“One needs both ways, that way you get easy access to Balanda, you can’t talk to Balanda you get nowhere, you can’t get to know these Balanda and all that, you gonna communicate by speaking English.....”

“Should go more than year 12. No one getting support to get a job after school”
“Yes be educated and get qualified”
“Yes, better chance to get job”
“Get job to make money”
“To get more education and better job”
“It’s a big (yes) for me it goes the same as even”
“. … you got to learn and get more educated, get more numeracy and literacy, to me young kids got to go to school so they can get their education. But they are not getting educated enough and they are not going to get any skills by not going to school, it is for them and their kids and (for them) not to let the Balanda take over this community, they got to think about that…. When Balanda bring paper (paperwork and contracts) they should learn and ask questions about the paper they got, what is this paper I am signing, and not just signing paper for nothing. Some people can’t understand that, they need an interpreter or that they need for big words to be broken down, we need to break it down so we can understand what the meaning of those big words is… young people should go to school.”

“. …get good qualification, it's your ticket so you can get a good job, mainly in education, healthy, mechanic or become more involved in accounting or bookkeeping, you can also probably get job as cultural advisor…”
“. …later on when I was bigger then I started to realise the importance of school, I looked at those making it and I wanted that too, all things came to my mind about why it was important. There were a lot of young people going to school, to Kormilda college. I thought, I must wait my chance. It worked out for some of them, maybe for half the group. I started to put things to us mob, having that role model for us when they came back, there would be a job available, in office, school, forestry or health, maybe machinery operator, I got little bit excited, big things make us want to have a good qualification…”

“There is nothing for them here, when they come here, there is nothing here, they go to school and come back and still there are no jobs.”

“I reckon the whole lot should go to University, and then instead of Balanda, we have Bininj, when they get that proper education, one come back as a scientist, one blackfella scientist instead of Balanda , we gonna be able to take over that scientist business…”

“If people agree, tell government what we do, Bininj people all right. Keep talking, so keep owning, don’t lose job. If you go outstation do own job, that’s what I planning to do. Do Bininj way, both ways. Like used to do before. So when get more better (better) education can run own business. Run own community. To me, that’s what I thinking doing, farming all that, gardening, and doing weaving, Pandanus, painting, stuff like that. Every weekend take kids’ culture camp teach Bininj way. Balanda way can learn like reading, writing all that. Especially read and write.”

“I would tell government every community needs university and school for study. I would tell them I want to see both ways education. Instead of flying (people to town) maybe they say it’s not enough money to send you in town. They are wasting money to go there (town). Every community needs a university school. Every community needs one. They go to town and waste too much money, miss home and get bored there (in town). In Oenpelli they spoke about needing writing and reading here in school. At the moment people are not focussing on future. Parents especially.”
APPENDIX II

Issues impacting on education, documented by ARPNet

- Government changes
- Ceremony
- Boarding school education
- Balanda education
- Bininj education
- Jobs in community
- School attendance
- Housing
- Ganja
- Grog (alcohol)
- Smoking
- Gambling
- Not listening to elders
- Homesick
- Get called balanda
- Lose culture
- Family issues
- Money issues
- Low literacy and numeracy
- Overcrowding
- No training
- Teenage pregnancy / young mums
- Truancy
- Cultural obligations
- Policies changing all the time
- Not enough trainers/lecturers in community
- Studying away from community is not easy
- University is for Balanda, Batchelor is for Bininj
- Service providers not always talking together
- Not all kids want to go to school
- Not all families want to send their kids to school
- Bullying
- Shaming
- Jealousy
APPENDIX III

Recommendations to strengthen education pathways, documented by ARPNet:

- Re-admission of young parents back to school into the correct ‘level’ of education (according to the right stage, not the right age)
- Taking young people to ceremony and recognising this ‘as educational’
- Supporting local people with on the job training into local jobs
- Addressing substance abuse issues
- Addressing teenage pregnancies
- Adult education – especially literacy and numeracy
- Computer skills training
- Admin training – completing forms, emails, using telephone
- Enterprise development/business training
- Governance training for Indigenous leaders and board members
- Mechanics training/ vehicle maintenance
- More funding and support of Homelands Education and Outstation Schools
- Work experience opportunities for school students
- Linking school graduates with ‘real’ jobs
- VET training in community
- University courses delivered in community
- Consultation with elders to develop curriculum
- More Bininj education
- More Balanda education
- More ‘both ways’ education with a balance of Bininj and Balanda – valuing of different knowledge systems
- Aboriginal knowledge and practices incorporated into mainstream education
- Bilingual education
- Listen to Bininj’s education needs
- Short courses – not necessarily accredited
- Allow for periods of absence for cultural or family business (e.g. funerals)
- Funding to send kids for higher education (e.g. scholarships)
- More VET courses/training delivered ‘on country’ or in community – e.g. Conservation Land Management or Indigenous Land Management.
### APPENDIX IV

Staff who participated in the workshop to draft the plan from: Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the School, JobFind, WARC, Catholic Care NT, Forward Thinking Consultant, Child and Family Centre and Team Health. The School Principal also contributed to the draft following email circulation.


<table>
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<th>WHAT action should be taken?</th>
<th>WHO should do this work?</th>
<th>HOW will this happen?</th>
<th>WHEN will we do this?</th>
<th>BENEFITS - what we hope to see when this action is taken?</th>
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| Strengthen work experience program | Senior school teachers in collaboration with service providers (including JobFind) | Mentoring training  
Clontarf and Girls Academy to provide mentoring and inspiring role models  
Leadership (training)  
Workshop for service providers | TBC | Work ethics  
Empowering our youth?  
Building resilience  
Relationship building |
| Work on getting kids to school (7am) | RSAS team (SAOs, SAS) work together with IEO, GEC, families, CEPO and whole community | Non-confrontational  
Change Bininj habit & attitude towards education | Every day | TBC |
| More home visits | Family Educator  
Family Liaison Officer | Visiting families tell them FaFT is open for 0-3 years and families | Every Friday | To support families in early education  
To be strong in both ways  
To learn about school culture  
To be strong to start school |
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<td>Balanda to learn some Kunwinkju language</td>
<td>All Balanda and Bininj workers</td>
<td>Specify time and activities Source resources Identify translations for key conversations Professional development around translation</td>
<td>Fortnightly language session/lesson (designated) Practice every day</td>
<td>More understanding on many levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balanda and Bininj to learn more about partnership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Better team work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Better outcomes (health, education etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Less dementia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WARC – within the workplace training should be relevant to: 1. the role 2. the person 3. the setting</td>
<td>Managers Trainers Training providers</td>
<td>Managers to do workplace activities and assessments Change position descriptions if needed (what are the actual skills needed?) What training to implement?</td>
<td>WARC have started to undertake this process (1 year so far, started with 1 department) Up to training roll out Starting next department soon.</td>
<td>Got buy-in from Bininj staff (it directly connects to their pay level)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Staff retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Instigated autonomy in getting license/IDs etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting school leadership</td>
<td>Stronger smarter institute staff All staff</td>
<td>Stronger smarter institute program delivered</td>
<td>1 week program has been delivered, second to flow in 2017</td>
<td>Stronger leadership demonstrated by all school staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX V

**Gunbalanya interagency workshop reflections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the most important thing you have learnt from listening to community voices today?</th>
<th>What opportunities are there for you and your workplace to best support education pathways?</th>
<th>What support do you need to help you provide these opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have learnt a lot about helping people about both ways (Bininj and Balanda)</td>
<td>Build in a culture of two way mentoring based on the strength of relationships</td>
<td>Support to learn about Bininj culture and two way learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That community input and voices need to be heard to understand and make plans and move forward together leaving no one behind</td>
<td>To let PMC understand local issues</td>
<td>More time A mentor for the mentor (training in how to be an effective mentor and how to be mentored)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep communication going in all ways</td>
<td>To be open to work experience students, job pathways Actively find solutions to make it work</td>
<td>I need my employer to allow time and resources to build the relationship in order to develop two way mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to make mentoring meaningful</td>
<td>Strengthening existing opportunities by taking the time to listen and respond to needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That listening, really listening to Bininj and their experiences is so important That building supportive relationships is key</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**APPENDIX VI**

**Youth film project outline**

**Aim:** to gather youth perspectives on their education experiences/perspectives

**Commitment:**
- to identify suitable youth (current senior school students/ school students/ school graduates) and interview them on film
- to identify suitable people to interview the youth (e.g. Bininj youth centre staff OR other community members they felt comfortable to talk to and share their stories with).

**Process:** interview youth wherever they feel comfortable – work to be completed by end Oct; edit and upload as a series of video clips; links to be provided to WCE to be shared with community and others, as appropriate.

**Details:** youth can speak in any language they choose (video clips can be interpreted later and English captioning added, if needed)

**Questions:** guideline drafted by WCE staff to prompt youth to tell their stories, but anything goes, it is their ‘real’ experiences that we are wanting to capture and learn from, only rule is ‘no swearing’.
- Invite you to share your story about your education...
- What was your education like?
- How far did you go with your education?
- What did you find difficult/what challenges did you face about your education?
- What helped you?
- Why do you think it is good to go to school?
- Why do you think some kids don’t go to school?
- What do you think they need to best support them at school?
- And what about after school?

**Why do this?**
The government has hugely invested in school attendance strategies and want to know why children to not go to school. The government has not talked to the ‘experts’ – that being the youth themselves - about their thoughts and ideas about education. The WCE researchers hope to learn about school experiences past and present, including bush, interstate and Darwin boarding school experiences etc. from the youth themselves. This information can be provided to WCE partners and the Commonwealth in the hope of making education more accessible, enjoyable and ‘school’ a place where remote Indigenous young people want to be.
Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme

Whole of Community Engagement Initiative

www.remotengagetoeedu.com.au
Maningrida Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Evaluation Report

Bininj and Balanda knowledge systems working together

Report prepared by Millie Olcay and Dean Yibarbuk
Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.

**DISCLAIMER**

This report was written by the stated authors and does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative of the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership of Charles Darwin University. It provides multiple perspectives and reflections on engagement with a range of stakeholders over time and is not intended to be definitive, comprehensive or imply community consensus with the views expressed.

Warning: Images of deceased persons may appear in this report.

**SUGGESTED CITATION**

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Acknowledgements

This research would not be possible without the participation and support of the Maningrida youth, families, custodians and traditional owners, key community leaders and wider community members and stakeholders. We extend a huge thank you to all those who consented to be a part of this journey, for sharing your insights, experiences and perspectives with us.

We are also extremely grateful to:

- The Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network (ARPNet) researchers and project team for conducting research with families and community;
- Dr Gretchen Ennis (Researcher/Lecturer, School of Health, CDU) for the training and assistance provided in navigating Social Network Analysis (SNA) – a tool we used to map our community engagement;
- Miranda Watt (Principal) for supporting our work and providing us with the opportunity to run workshops with school staff, interagency staff, traditional owners and board members on school grounds;
- Kieren Lines (Assistant Principal) for supporting us with recruitment processes and connecting us with homelands teachers and visiting teachers;
- Mason Scholes and the Language and Culture team for providing us with a workspace and for always making time to meet to exchange ideas and discuss progress;
- Philamena McKenzie and the GYS staff for working together with us to support youth participation at the Youth Summit and Indigenous Leaders Conference;
- Our WCE partners – Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges in Education (ACIKE), Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), The Northern Territory Department of Education (NT DoE).
- The former Office of Pro-Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership (OPVC-IL), Professor Steve Larkin, Wendy Ludwig (Acting OPVC-IL), Associate Professor James Smith (Program Manager).
- Our extended WCE family across the other communities and on campus.
- Cat Street (Evaluation Coordinator).
- Our funder – the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.
- Susan Sinclair from UniPrint – for your artistic talent, transferring our ‘scribble’ into a colourful illustration.
- Each other for the incredible collaborative, collective efforts we have made as WCE West Arnhem staff, bringing two tool boxes of skills and knowledge together – both Bininj and Balanda – to work on this research with the Maningrida community and our WCE partners.

A note on language used: The terms ‘Indigenous’, ‘Aboriginal’, ‘Bininj’ (men) and ‘Daluk’ (women) are used interchangeably throughout this report to refer to First Nations people of Australia living in the remote West Arnhem community of Gunbalanya. ‘Balanda’ is used to refer to Western people or knowledge systems.

A note on quotes: The identity of the research participants has intentionally been kept confidential; consent was obtained to record these quotes.

A note on photos: Where first names only have been used to identify people in photos, this was intentional.
MANINGRIDA HIGHER EDUCATION PATHWAYS RESEARCH

Figure 1: Higher education pathways poster (in Kunwinkju/English).

Background

The Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative is funded by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.

The aim of WCE is to engage six remote and very remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory to build aspiration, expectation and capacity for higher education, supporting strong, sustainable pathways from early childhood through to lifelong post-secondary education.

Objectives include:

• Exploring current community perspectives of higher education, and linking with existing strategies for achieving quality of life aspirations;

• Co-creating ongoing opportunities for community, research, academic and public policy leaders to engage in mutually beneficial and critical relationships; and

• Identifying means for making education relevant and culturally and physically accessible.

Maningrida is one of the six communities participating in the WCE initiative in the West Arnhem region. Other communities include Gunbalanya (West Arnhem), Yirrkala, Galiwinku (East Arnhem), Tennant Creek and Yuendumu (Central Desert).

In West Arnhem, the Community Engagement Leader and Mentor and Engagement Officer worked across both Gunbalanya and Maningrida communities, following a similar community engagement approach that was agreed and supported by both communities.
The research teams – WCE and ARPNet

Since October 2014, a total of five researchers were employed by the Office of Pro-Vice Chancellor-Indigenous Leadership, Charles Darwin University (CDU), to lead Participatory Action Research, exploring remote Indigenous higher education pathways in Maningrida, West Arnhem. An additional team of thirteen community-based researchers were employed under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the OPVC-IL and the Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network (ARPNet), auspiced by the Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL) at CDU.

This is the first time, that we are aware of, that two teams of Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers have come together in this way, combining their research skills and knowledge to explore the perspectives and experiences of remote Indigenous young people, families, key community leaders and traditional owners, service providers and other key stakeholders living in community.

Some WCE and ARPNet researchers also worked in Gunbalanya (the other WCE community in the West Arnhem Region).

Current WCE Staff:

Millie Olcay – Community Engagement Leader (Sep 2014 - Dec 2016)

Ms Millie Olcay (MEd by Research, Grad DipEd, BA Hons, Exec Dip, Dip, Cert IV TAE) brings over 18 years of experience with her in early childhood, primary and tertiary education, community engagement, inclusion and equity and in more recent years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and research in remote Indigenous communities in the NT. Her research specialises in participatory action research methodologies; engaging educators to design curriculum and pedagogy according to students’ voices, experiences and perspectives; pre-service teacher perspectives on online learning, reflective practice and community engagement; and perspectives on inclusive practices in remote Indigenous early childhood settings.

Figure 2: Millie Olcay.
Dean Yibarbuk – Mentor and Engagement Officer (Jan - Dec 2016)
Dean has taken a prominent leadership role in developing contemporary land management programs to deal with conservation issues on Aboriginal land. A driving force behind the development of the Djelk rangers at Maningrida, Dean is also a senior ranger. He has also been a chairman of both Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation and Demed Association Inc.

Dean has been a key figure in the development of Warddeken Land Management Limited, the declaration of the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area and the development of a ground-breaking use of traditional knowledge of savannah burning practices to deal with climate change.

Dean is the Mentor and Facilitator of Warddeken Land Management Limited, a not-for-profit established to support a movement back to country linked to critical conservation issues. He has travelled widely in Australia and overseas to speak on fire management and other conservation issues.

Dean also is also founding director of the Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network (ARPNet) hosted by Charles Darwin University (CDU) and is currently working as the Mentor and Engagement Officer for the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative in both Maningrida and Gunbalanya. Dean has participated in a number of conference and projects – locally, nationally and internationally.

Former WCE Staff:
• Dean Yibarbuk – Lead Community Researcher (Feb-Dec 2015)
• Serina Namarnyilk – Indigenous Mentor (Jul 2015 – Feb 2016)
• Jamie Hagan – Mentor and Engagement Officer (Oct 2014- Jan 2016)
• Donna Stephens – Teacher Liaison Leader (Jan 2015 – Jan 2016)
**ARPNet researchers (2015-2016):**
(Some of the team members are pictured here)

1. Christine Brown (Team Leader)
2. Godfrey Blitner
3. Dennis Naroldol
4. Alycia Campion
5. Mike Radford
6. Julius Kernan
7. Maurissa Henwood
8. Eddie Phillips
9. Josiah Campion
10. Charlton Richards
11. Jack Nawilil
12. Josie Diddo
13. Hmalan Hunter-Xenie

**Community context**

Maningrida, is situated approximately is 500 km east of Darwin, and 300 km north east of Jabiru. Maningrida is an Anglicised version of the Kunibidji name Manayingkarirra and is a community of approximately 2,500+ mainly Indigenous (with some non-Indigenous) people. The main languages spoken are Ndjebbana, Burarra, Nakara, Kune, Kunwinjku, Gurr-goni, Rembarrnga, Wulaki, Kunbarlang, Gunartpa and Djinang, however, the community operates administratively in English and there are other Indigenous languages spoken as different clans have arrived and settled in the community. Access is gained with a permit (obtained through the Northern Land Council), but is limited due to seasonal conditions. In the dry season (May-Sept) there is road access, however, during the wet season (Oct-Apr), the tidal East Alligator ‘croc-filled’ river at Cahill’s Crossing, is usually impassable.

Figure 4: Some of the female ARPNet team.

Figure 5: Some of the male ARPNet team.
The community is well serviced through the school, West Arnhem Regional Council, health clinic, police station, post office agency, a variety of other visiting government and non-government agencies and the Prime Minister and Cabinet’s Government Engagement Coordinator and Indigenous Engagement Officer. Recreational facilities include a 25-metre swimming pool, fishing, boating, hiking, arts and craft, sports ovals, youth centre and basketball facilities. The major employment industries are education, health, ranger programs, community-owned supermarkets and food outlets, council services, service stations and community arts and crafts (including Babbarra Women’s Centre and Maningrida Arts and Craft).

Maningrida Community Education Centre

This community school caters for students from birth to Year 12. The Child and Family Centre of the school opened in 2012 and operate a crèche, preschool and Families and First Teachers program (FAFT). The Language and Culture team at the school also provide additional language support and run cultural activities with the students and staff in Ndjebbana and Burarra. Two visiting teachers from the school make regular visits out to support the homelands teachers on outstations. Also embedded within the school curriculum are:

- Learning on Country Program
- VET in Schools pathways

Maningrida school enjoys considerable support from a range of industry partners – both local e.g. West Arnhem Regional Council, Djelk Rangers and external e.g. CDU, BIITE as well as interstate school students (e.g. Trinity Grammar) and University pre-service teachers (e.g. Deakin Uni). The school is currently expanding its performing arts and music curricula.

Engaging key stakeholders

The following diagram shows the engagement of the Community Engagement Leader, the Mentor and Enrichment Officer and the Mentor and Engagement Officer from November 2014 to March 2016. Data for this diagram comes from the field reports of these WCE campus-based staff, for which all meetings (and attendances) have been recorded. Information about who participated in meetings, the organisation(s) that person/people were representing (if any) and dates were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet template designed for this purpose. This information was then organised, imported into ‘Gephi’ SNA software for the development of this diagram and for analysis by Dr Gretchen Ennis (Lecturer/Researcher in the School of Health at CDU), who was consulted to support this work. This WCE community engagement network data was gathered at three points in time:

- Mid November 2014 (to demonstrate initial engagement)
- End of July 2015 (mid-life of project)
- End of March 2016 (toward the final stages of the project)
This diagram does not record the engagement of the ARPNet researchers, the WCE Lead Community Researcher (2014-2015), the Teacher Liaison Leader (2014-2016) or any visits from the Program Manager or Evaluation Coordinator. However, it provides an indication of the depth of engagement across the community.

Features of Maningrida engagement network between November 2014 to March 2016:
Number of organisations (blue dots) engaged with: 38
Number of individuals (orange dots) engaged with: 147
Number of groups (green dots) engaged with: 7 (comprising 272 people)

Figure 7: Social Network Analysis diagram at March 2016.
The lines between the WCE campus-based staff (blue central dot), the organisations (blue dots) and the individuals (orange dots) or groups of people (green dots) who are affiliated with that organisation carry information about the number of times that specific person or group was engaged; the thicker the line, the greater the engagement. Organisations are named in the diagrams, but people are not. From this diagram, WCE engaged the most with: the school, Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC), key community members and traditional owners (Traditional owners), Malabam, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC) and ARPNet. The least met with organisation was the health clinic. Despite attempts to meet with health staff, competing work commitments appeared to limit engagement. However, WCE staff met with Regional Department of Health staff members in Darwin who oversee training needs of clinic staff.

By November 2016, WCE campus-based staff had engaged the following organisations/groups:

- Charles Darwin University (CDU)
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC)
- NT Dept. Local and Regional Services
- Maningrida Community Education Centre (the school), including:
  - Child and Family Centre (CFC) - Families as First Teachers (FAFT), Crèche, Pre-School
  - Yuya Bol
  - School council
- Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC), including:
  - Djelk rangers
  - Maningrida Arts and Crafts
  - The Wiwa Project
  - Remote Jobs in Community Program (RJCP)
  - Remote School Attendance Strategy (RSAS) staff
- Maningrida Progress Association (MPA)
- Malabam Health Board Aboriginal Corporation (MHBAC), including:
  - Greats Youth Services (GYS)
- West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC), including:
  - Local Authority Group (LAG)
- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)
- HK Learning (Registered Training Organisation)
- Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA)
- Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network (ARPNet)
- Maningrida Health Clinic
- Department of Trade, Business and Innovation
- Indigenous Contractors (INTRACT)
- Northern Land Council (NLC)
- Menzies School of Health Research
- Three interstate Universities (University of Southern Queensland, University of Sydney, La Trobe University)
- Two interstate schools (Trinity and Ruyton, VIC)
- One other WCE school (Shepherdson, Galiwinku) – visiting Maningrida
• Warddeken Land Management Rangers
• NT Police
• NT Department of Correction
• Safe House
• Australian Sports Commission
• AFL NT
• Narbelek Band
• NT Department of Education

Local governance
The following local governance structures oversee the operations of some of these key agencies within the community. They include, but are not limited to:
• Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation Board
• Maningrida Progress Association Board
• Malabam Health Board
• Local Authority Group of the West Arnhem Regional Council (WARC)
• School Council
• Housing Reference Group

Community engagement and research process
There were four phases to the community engagement and research process. Some phases operated at the same time.

Phase One (Oct 2014- Jan 2015)
• WCE team established – including the identification of Indigenous researchers, employed by CDU;
• Ethics approval received by WCE to conduct the research;
• Permit granted by Northern Land Council (NLC) for the WCE research team to access the remote community;
• Introductory visit to community – overview of HEPPP funding and the aims and objectives of the WCE initiative were shared;
• Key leaders and community organisations invited to participate in and support the initiative;
• Community interest expressed and local consent obtained to go ahead;
• ARPNet researchers identified and MoU/SLA with RIEL developed, with funds attached.

Figure 8: Letter of support.
Phase Two (Oct 2014-Oct 2016)

• ‘Whole of Community Engagement’ Initiative explored as a ‘concept’ - what does ‘whole’ of community engagement look like? How would it be achievable? Who is ‘community’? For us, WCE meant engaging a representative sample of families across all clan groups, traditional owners, key community leaders, Heads of Agency and key operational staff from all services operating in community, visiting staff from external organisations, and any other individuals/organisations, as directed by community.

• Model proposed through discussions between WCE staff, the Program Manager and ARPNet (see diagram below); ARPnet to conduct 3 waves of research* with Indigenous families and community members at grassroots level; WCE to conduct their own research cycles with service providers, key community leaders and other agencies; WCE to plan/act/reflect on the ARPNet findings as well as their own findings throughout the research journey to guide and inform each stage.

• It was decided that in the instance of the ‘same individual’ being consulted by both ARPNet and WCE, that it would be made clear to that individual what perspective they were being asked to provide – for example, as a parent (via ARPNet) or as board member (via WCE).

*Due to the depth of research data collected by ARPNet in Wave 1, and challenges with the remaining timeframe, Waves 2 and 3 of ARPNet research did not go ahead as planned. WCE staff, however, continued with their PAR cycles, using Wave 1 ARPNet data to inform their ongoing work.
Guiding principles

Throughout the WCE initiative, both the WCE and ARPNet research teams were guided by the principles developed by the wider WCE campus-based staff team. All agreed that communication (external and internal) would be:

- Thoughtful – this will involve adopting a consultative and strengths-based approach; communication will be timely, consistent and regular.
- Genuine – this will involve taking time to establish relationships with community leaders and families that are built on trust and respect; expectations will be carefully managed; communication will be community focused, inclusive and transparent.
- Meaningful – this will involve clear and concise messaging (not too academic); with the support of community leaders communication will be delivered in local language, wherever possible.
- Ethically appropriate – this will involve a commitment to community engagement and decision-making that is guided by national and global Indigenous ethical frameworks; this also involves acknowledgement and ownership of intellectual property.
- Culturally respectful (in both approach and delivery) – this will involve an awareness of matriarchal and patriarchal decision-making processes, which will ensure responsiveness to local cultural practices; community leaders will be adequately remunerated for sharing and contributing Indigenous knowledges.
- Participatory – this will involve project partners working collaboratively (‘with’ not ‘on’ or ‘about’) to enhance a sense of ownership and minimise feelings of disempowerment; this will ensure that outcomes are directed by, and benefit, the local community
- Considerate of, and responsive to, first languages – this will involve honouring primary/first languages; the use of trained interpreters will also be supported.
- Underpinned by two-way learning approaches – this will involve engaging with both Indigenous and Mainstream/Western (academic) knowledge systems equally, with a view of supporting the co-creation of knowledge and aspiration development.

Phase 3 (Oct 2014-Oct 2016)

- WCE met with key individuals and organisations for one week in every month, recording data collected, by facilitating meetings, key interviews, workshop activities, making observations, taking field notes, photos, videos and audio recordings.
- In between each visit, WCE staff regularly maintained engagement with community contacts via the following methods: phone calls, meetings in Darwin, Facebook Messenger. WCE staff also shared back information to WCE partners, as appropriate.
- In May 2015, WCE funded five days of ARPNet training at a camp on the East Alligator River. All ARPNet researchers, who were interested in being involved in the WCE research, were invited to participate. Due to a number of issues beyond our control (funerals, events in community, timing when ARPNet Training Coordinator and Project Coordinator were available to conduct this work) numbers were more limited than originally proposed (up to fifteen senior community members

Figure 10: ARPNet training at East Alligator camp.
Two very young females (under sixteen year olds), one male and four female youth (in their twenties), and one senior female (a total of nine) engaged in this training opportunity. The training was delivered by Dr Bev Sithole and Hmalan Hunter-Xenie from ARPNet. Three WCE staff members (Community Engagement Leader, Mentor and Engagement Officer, Evaluation Manager) attended to provide some background of the aims and objectives of WCE and to discuss and reflect on which of the ARPNet research tools might best fit with the work proposed.

- Arising out of conversations among the West Arnhem WCE staff and WCE campus-based staff about the value of bringing together the Top End and Central Desert WCE Indigenous researchers together, a Remote Indigenous Researcher Forum (RIRF) was suggested to all six communities and other Indigenous research organisations across the NT. WCE funding was approved and the forum took place on CDU Casuarina campus (Aug, 2015); Indigenous research ethical protocols, methodologies, and visions were shared.

- ARPNet researchers conducted Wave 1 of their research (Feb-May 2016) - see Appendices I-III for a summary of ARPNet research findings.

- ARPNet asked five key questions (listed below in **bold**), using a range of participatory research tools (taken from the resource entitled: ‘The ARPNet DillyBag by Dr Bevlyne Sithole: A practical field guide to participatory and other research tools for use by Aboriginal Research Practitioners in Australia’). A representative sample of family members—taking gender, age and clan into account—were invited to participate in the research.

**What do you think of higher education?**  
(Do you know what that is? Would you let your kids get higher education?)

**What is both ways education?**  
(Is there Bininj education? Is this different from Balanda education?)

**What kind of education do you want for your children?**  
Is getting an education important for Aboriginal people?  
(What is education for, why get it? Is getting an education important to you? What happens to you mob after you get an education?)

**What 3 things are important for you about getting an education?**

![Figure 11: Some surveymonkey responses.](image-url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dilly bag tools</th>
<th>Maningrida (men)</th>
<th>Old people</th>
<th>Mature people</th>
<th>Young people</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bininj</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daluk (women)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer based Key interviews (iPad)</th>
<th>Maningrida (men)</th>
<th>Old people</th>
<th>Mature people</th>
<th>Young people</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bininj</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daluk (women)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 12: Distribution of research participants by gender and age.](image-url)
Due to constraints of time, other ARPNet commitments, and the good quality and volume of data provided to WCE following Wave 1, it was decided not to go ahead with Waves 2 and 3 of ARPNet research.

- MoU revised, ARPNet research report finalised and sent to WCE.
- Two school council members were invited to participate in a Joint School Council Gathering in Yirrkala – which brought together council members across the six WCE sites to discuss educational priorities and concerns (May, 2016).
- From Aug-Oct 2016, four WCE workshops in community conducted with 1) thirty school teachers, 2) eighteen Yuya Bol (Indigenous staff), 3) eight interagency staff (from five organisations) and 4) ten Traditional owners/Board members to discuss and analyse issues and emerging themes and to develop a Draft Community Education Action Plan based on discussions about the ARPNet research findings [see Appendix V]. All organisations listed in the section entitled Key stakeholders were invited to attend the workshop. Despite keen interest being expressed, some staff members were unable to attend for a variety of reasons, apologies were sent, and requests made for draft action plans and reports to be provided back to them to circulate to staff. The draft plan was then circulated to all key stakeholders (whether they attended or not) to edit or add to the plan.
- WCE staff invited to participate in two opportunities in 2016 - to provide relevant higher education pathway information to senior school students and the wider Maningrida community – CDU stall at Market Day of the Lurra Festival (Oct 2016), two-day Career Expo (Nov 2016) – see later section.
- WCE in collaboration with CDU International Graduate Centre of Education organised a two-day Youth Summit prior to a two-day Indigenous Leaders Conference (Nov, 2016). Emerging youth leaders identified by GYS were invited to participate in the week.

**Youth perspectives on education**

During this phase of the research and arising out of conversations with school staff, a youth project was proposed similar to the one that took place in Gunbalanya, but with a slightly different focus, (for more info, please see https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/blog/gathering-youth-perspectives-about-their-education-journeys/).

Given the decline in school graduates from 2006 (see bar chart) until recent years*, the aim of the project was to catch up with school leavers over the past few years, to explore their education perspectives and experiences.

Due to competing work commitments of Wiwa Project, GYS and school staff who were interested to be involved in this, as well as the WCE staff working across the two WCE West Arnhem communities, and the time constraints of the initiative, this work did not go ahead.

[* In 2016, two students have graduated and seven are on track to graduate next year, in 2017.*]

**Phase 4 (Oct-Dec 2016)**

- The following evaluation questions were circulated to key Maningrida community individuals and reviewed by WCE [See Appendix VI]:
  - What has been the most valuable part of the WCE Initiative for you or your organisation?
  - What could have been done better/differently in the WCE Initiative?
What changes/impact have you seen in your community as a result of the WCE Initiative?

What will you/your organisation change as a result of being part of the WCE Initiative?

Any other feedback?

- An additional anonymous Survey Monkey evaluation tool was circulated to key stakeholders also, to be reviewed by the WCE Evaluation Coordinator.
- WCE work presented at conferences (Nov/Dec).
- Maningrida WCE Research and Evaluation Report finalised.
- Hard copies of reports to be mailed out to key agencies and individuals to distribute in community (Dec).

Summary of research experience

(Illustrated below is an upwards spiral representing the knowledge that is built up over time – read from the bottom up - through PAR cycles of planning-action-reflection, as represented also in the tree trunk of the ‘Five Rights’ on page 20).

17 Knowledge built over time!
16 Future planning (field notes). And so on....
15 Collaborative writing (reports).
14 Reflections (notes, audio recordings).
13 Workshops delivered.
12 Workshops planned with community (workshop presentation slides and resources).
11 Findings reported by ARPNet (report).
10 Reflection and debrief (audio recordings, field visit reports), ongoing.
9 Data analysed (audio recordings, field notes), ongoing.
8 Data collected (field visit reports, field notes, audio and video recordings, workshop notes, emails, Facebook messages), ongoing.
7 Research process refined: Wave one only; WCE to continue working with service providers, key stakeholders and community leaders/TOs.
6 Wave one ARPNet research conducted.
5 Analysis and reflection.
4 Research approach designed.
3 ‘Whole of Community Engagement’ defined.
2 ARPNet training delivered.
1 Issue defined: PAR exploring higher education pathways.

Figure 14: Diagram demonstrating the research process.
Key partnerships

- ARPNet (Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network) through a MoU and a service level agreement, under the auspices of RIEL. This has involved ARPNet engaging a team of Aboriginal researchers to research with Indigenous individuals, families, Elders and young people across a number of clan groups – see prior section on research process for more details.

- WCE staff conducted monthly consultations with all key stakeholders – listed in earlier section - to develop and build partnerships with all of these agencies.

- WCE staff facilitated workshops with interagency staff to identify actions that can be taken to best support Indigenous higher education pathways. Existing partnerships with key individuals and organisations were strengthened through this process, and opportunities identified.

- Throughout the initiative, WCE campus-based staff shared research findings and information about key activities with the WCE partners, and invited them to collaborate and participate, where and when appropriate, e.g. two-day careers expo.

- NAILSMA remained actively involved with land and sea management education and training activities in the region.

- RIEL continued to progress the development and piloting of fire curriculum materials and training in the region. WCE staff attended fire curriculum meetings in Darwin, where applicable.

- BIITE continued to support education and training in the region, and provided advice and infrastructure support (accommodation/vehicle use), on occasion.

- The Mentor and Engagement Officer (2016) as a governing member of ‘Research Us’ – a recently incorporated Indigenous corporation (which arose out of the RIRF, held at CDU in 2015) – partners with other remote WCE and other Indigenous researchers.

Key achievements

In reflecting on the research work conducted over the past two years, the following achievements were identified:

Our community engagement process

The way that we have engaged with community:

“In our blood is a code of rules: respect is the most powerful thing in Indigenous communities. The code of rules, we understand that when we approach, we approach with manners ... you’ve got to talk to the people in the right place and the right people at the right time, and the right way, and respect the communities. This should always be happening. Sometimes ... those people in other places. Well it’s not the right place for them to consult with... making sure that they’re available, then you can go and make contact with these people... we asked the people ... have they got time to sit down and talk about it. If they say, “Come back later,” well, we take that opportunity to come back later and work with this group... if you’re going with your manners and approaching the way that you want to consult with a person and talk to him, you want to have a good yarn with him, to sit down and give you his story, he will relax, he knows. He knows that you want to have a good conversation with him and he wants to hear your stories, where you’re coming from .... So two-ways... Indigenous learning ... as well.”

WCE Mentor & Engagement Officer.
The Five Rights: Right People, Right Time, Right Place, Right Language, Right Way
(This title is borrowed from a resource developed from a Community Governance Training program in Maningrida presented at the Garma Forum in 2004 by JET Centre board & staff in Maningrida’)

The following illustration was developed in conversations between the Community Engagement Leader and the Mentor and Engagement Officer about the process involved in undertaking the research in an Indigenous education policy environment. This image tells a story about past and present research practices and future visions for Bininj people. It captures the important recognition of the skills and knowledge that exist already within Bininj people and the impact of external influences on Aboriginal communities. Done the ‘right way’, research can empower Indigenous people, if given the opportunity to drive the research agenda ‘the Bininj way’ following many unwritten rules and protocols (some of which are captured by metaphors contained in this image).

Figure 15: Illustration of the process of undertaking research in an Indigenous education policy environment. This image is strictly not to be reproduced without gaining prior consent from the authors of this report.

1. **Bush yam** – researchers with the skills to know how to dig up the yam (the stories from community) and the knowledge about when is the right time to harvest the yam (to do the research). When you harvest the yam correctly, you make sure you dig up the yam with the whole root system (the whole story, big picture), not collecting only a small part of the yam (a part of the story). Also, you always leave some of the yam behind (take the stories back to community) so that the yam can regenerate and grow (self-determined actions can be taken).

2. **Grassroots and root system** – the research is conducted with the Bininj families and the communities at the grass roots by ARPNet, then these stories are shared/fed back up through the rest of the system (tree trunk) – to local community, to WCE partners, to the wider community.

3. **Research cycles** – continuous feedback loops - from the families/community members through ARPNet to WCE campus-based staff, from WCE through to community-based workshops with teachers, service providers, TOs and Board members and others. The information was continually shared and knowledge built up over time as we did so.
4. **Leaves/seeds** – ideas that are germinating, actions that are being identified.

5. **Seedlings** - actions that are being taken by community members to strengthen education pathways.

6. **Busy bees** – WCE researchers, sharing the ideas and passing the messages on (pollen), leaving some behind, fertilising the seedlings along the way.

7. **Sun** – the resources needed; ‘Right People, Right Time, Right Place, Right Language, Right Way* to sustain this work (ecosystem). Without the right support from the government and elsewhere, it will dry up (the work stops). It is like a big smiling face – the journey is going in the right direction.

8. **Cyclone** – rapid changing policy environment and government changes that impacts the environment we find ourselves in.

9. **4WD vehicle** – outside influences (programs, people, laws, regulations) that are not naturally found in the environment (community) impact it.

10. **Buffalo** – both the 4WD and the buffalo make tracks (creates issues and problems) and erodes the country (impacts on Indigenous people - needs and rights are not being met). It costs money to eradicate these issues once they have been created.

11. **Rain water** – natural resources (skills and knowledge) that exist in the community.

12. **Billabong** – when nature runs its course, the water fills the billabong it nurtures and sustains the environment. These natural resources flood out, if there is erosion, taking the water down a different path that Indigenous people cannot cope with or manage within their existing knowledge systems.

13. **Ripple effect** – if ideas are allowed to come at the right time in the right way in accordance with the seasons, the ripples (information) can flow in and out, shared with everyone.

14. **Rainbow** – symbolises the research journey, the education pathways of community members and the visions and dreams of the children, youth, Elders, families. Pride in our children, our organisations, our school. When there is the right combination of factors in place (5 Rights), the pathway shines bright and we are happy. We are happier when we are all working together, connected and supporting each other, providing accessible, inclusive education pathways; bright futures.

15. **Bush fire** – regenerates the plants and supports the animals, is a symbol of a healthy landscape, provides healthy food, supports birth and rebirth. A natural system (respecting Indigenous knowledges) supports self-determined futures for Indigenous people.
• Our partnership with the school. As illustrated in the SNA diagram (on page 9), we engaged the most with the school staff. The leadership team supported our work throughout the initiative enabling us to run workshops with school and interagency staff as well as with board members and Traditional Owners, as well as connecting with homelands and visiting teachers. The language and culture team (who are also traditional owners, key community leaders and diverse language speakers representing a number of clan groups in Maningrida) made themselves available every visit. The Language and Culture teachers and coordinator discussed and guided our work, asked questions about further education for themselves and other community members, sought mentoring support to guide their own studies, contributed a draft chapter for consideration in an upcoming publication*, invited us to participate in their cultural ‘Induction’ provided to newcomers to community, participated in our workshops, and encouraged us throughout the research journey.

[*Ober, R, Olcay, M, Frawley, J & Smith, JA (Eds., under review) Indigenous Students’ Experiences of Higher Education: Rippling Stories of Success, Illinois, US, Common Ground Publishing. A project funded by a grant received from the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, Curtin University]

• Providing teaching and general school staff (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) with the opportunity to access ARPNet findings – family and community perspectives in Maningrida – to consider how this information could guide and support their work and strengthen education pathways of people in community – “what you and babba did today in the workshop was really important... how can we get you to come back? We need at least two more days to explore these issues. I think it was really useful for staff to hear the stories from family.” [see also Appendix IV for some of their reflections].

• Bringing service providers together around the common concern of ‘education’ – in an interagency workshop with heads of agency and key operational staff. During this workshop, participants were invited to develop an action plan to strengthen higher education pathways in Maningrida – “I find I am putting more effort into mentoring workers as a result of the WCE”. An additional aim of this was to facilitate opportunities for different agencies to share information and to identify areas that they could work on together – for example, the school and Child and Family Centre staff to meet to discuss supporting the educational needs of young mums, or the school and BAC (including CDP) to explore work experience possibilities – “Establish stronger relationships with the school so that we are working with Year 10, 11 and 12 students to place them in a work area they are interested in” [see also Appendix V].

• The interest shown by Traditional owners/Board members (e.g. MPA, BAC), the Government Engagement Coordinators and Indigenous Engagement Officer to work closely with us – “I look forward to hearing the results of the research”. Every visit we made to community, we touched base with key leaders, and time was always made by them to discuss progress and share ideas and information. Despite other commitments, ten of these representatives attended a final workshop with us to discuss ARPNet and WCE research and workshop findings, as well as to consider future recommendations and directions.

• Providing a platform to listen and respond to family and community voices about their perspectives, experiences and ideas about education – “it is great that the locals are given their say, it’s their community.”
Collaborating with partners – e.g. NAILSMA (e.g. sharing discussions about VET Certificate in Indigenous Land Management workshops); BIITE and CDU (e.g. mentoring of Child and Family staff enrolled in or thinking about furthering their education; supporting enrolment, passing on information to BIITE and CDU campus-based staff; connecting community members to relevant BIITE and CDU staff for course advice; facilitating CDU and BIITE staff participation in the career’s expo – see next section).

Mentoring

“When they heard about our visits and our work, about our involvement in the community engagement, they started to come up to us, they started to wait around when we got to Maningrida or Oenpelli, there were people saying, “I’ve been waiting for you guys,” and that expectation that I see in people’s faces, it’s real and they’re looking for somebody. They’re looking for those pathways as well. So that’s very, very strong sharing and learning together and connecting with the key Indigenous leaders, people who work in the different areas and belong to the different governance areas … Making a connection with those people and talking… Sharing our stories and learning together was a really powerful way of getting people more motivated, more interested in following up education pathways… They were sharing their visions and concerns as well.”

Mentoring over fifty community members to support their educational aspirations (including Child and Family staff, Assistant Teachers, Remote School Attendance staff, Language and Culture staff, Interagency staff about family and community perspectives on education among others).

Supporting the community to build a picture of what they want in terms of their education—including discussions about homelands education, ‘both ways’ education, boarding school education - to feed back to the education system through our partners and funding body.
• Supporting community members to identify actions to strengthen education pathways.

• Promoting ‘Uni’ or higher education as an option for community members through the sharing of information, resources and connections with relevant staff – e.g. WCE researchers were requested by Maningrida community to provide higher education pathways resources and information for senior school students in Maningrida (as well as from Gunbalanya, Milingimbi, Ramingining) at a two-day Career’s Expo, funded by the Community Champions Program and WCE (Nov, 2016). WCE coordinated and part-funded the participation of CDU, Menzies, BIITE and NAILSMA staff members. Seven staff attended.

• Providing professional development for staff in key community organisations – through the meetings and workshops.

• Providing opportunities for students to celebrate their educational achievements and share their educational visions with others (e.g. discussing school experiences, participating in the Youth Summit).

• Raising awareness about CDU and other higher education providers can offer (e.g. Stall, Expo, Youth Summit and Indigenous Leaders Conference) – “as a direct result of the youth summit, Kevin and his brother have now been researching courses at Uni for next year.”

• Mentorship through sport – the former Mentor and Engagement Officer participated in the Jabiru Gurrung Sports Carnival at the Mahbilil Festival, 2015. This work involved connecting with youth from a number of communities, and staff from the Australian Sports Commission and the STARS program for young Indigenous females.

Figure 18: From (L): Philamena receiving her Certificate of Participation for the Youth Leadership Summit; Maningrida youth participating in Youth Leadership Summit; WCE staff participating with youth at the Jabiru Gurrung Sports Carnival.

Acknowledging, valuing and embracing complexity and cultural differences

“Our [Binin] relationships and our aspirations across the communities, that is most important, the reuniting of our relationships... Before, there was a really good uniting when there were less impacts, but when the settlement got bigger and bigger until today, it’s impacted ... different clan groups - had good connections, those relationships were very, very strong ... and they were very, very proud of themselves across different clan groups in our community, but nowadays, sometimes that relationship goes down and they need to rebuild that relationship again because of a lot of things happening in this life. Some people are moving out and all that, it’s happening all the time.”
• The WCE staff employed brought together both ‘toolboxes’ of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous skills and knowledge. Both were valued equally, views were shared, and complexity explored and acknowledged.

• WCE staff understand that Indigenous people, like other ‘groups’ in society, are not a one singular (homogenous) group – not everyone is the same, nor do they share the same perspectives on education.

• The research exposes the varied viewpoints of Indigenous people about education.

• WCE staff worked with cultural differences and complexity by maintaining a respectful, open-minded, flexible attitude and approach.

**Governance, leadership, and management**

• In discussion with key community members, it was decided not to establish an additional governance structure for the initiative, but rather to work through existing governance structures such as heads of agency meetings and meetings with boards.

• Over seven hundred meetings were held with individuals or small groups across all key organisations, with over three hundred people (in addition to the ARPNet research conducted) over the two years, recorded in SNA spreadsheets and field visit reports.

• Through workshops, eight key staff members from five key agencies were brought together as well as ten board members/traditional owners, connecting them around the shared concern of education (see [http://eepurl.com/clVRd5](http://eepurl.com/clVRd5)).
• This was identified by some to support clan as well as mainstream leadership and governance – “We need to organise the [Indigenous education] action group as soon as possible so that they can work with any agency within the community.”

• Four emerging youth leaders actively participated in the ‘Remote Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit’, followed by an ‘Indigenous Leaders Conference’ (Nov, 2016) – see: http://igce.cdu.edu.au/2016ilc. The youngest participant was thirteen years old, describing himself as a ‘freedom fighter’ for the rights of Indigenous youth - “Last week was awesome, the team are feeling very empowered and have so many great ideas!” - Youth Leadership Summit participant.

• Two School Council representatives attended the Joint School Council Gathering (Yirrkala) and contributed as a signatory to a ‘collective school council statement on remote Indigenous education’.

**Systems and policies**

• Working at a systems level in community to build local knowledge about higher education to support Indigenous learners (through provision of mentoring, ARPnet training, participation in the ARPnet research, WCE research meetings, workshops informing Maningrida service provision, career’s expo, Youth Summit and Indigenous Leaders conference).

• Creating opportunities for the research to inform academic and public policy decision making (including the Pre-Tertiary Success course, and the new Strategic Plan of the University, 2015-2025 – ‘Connect, Discover, Grow’) through key meetings with staff and participation in focus groups. See [http://www.cdu.edu.au/sites/default/files/strategic-plan.pdf](http://www.cdu.edu.au/sites/default/files/strategic-plan.pdf) for more information.

• Contributing to other research and engagement efforts, at the request of other WCE partner/researchers – e.g. Menzies research, Rheumatic Heart Disease PhD research, BIITE Indigenous Education Implementation Evaluation for the NT Department of Education.

• Sharing our methodological approach with postgraduate researchers (both PhD and Masters), to support reflections on their own research methodology – “One of the main limitations of my previous work (as a self-study) was the absence of the considered voice of Indigenous people as co researchers or participants... the model you described is something that would fit nicely in as an example of methodology aligned more closely with priorities of the community and also as repositioning indigenous people as subjects as opposed to objects of research.” In this way, the WCE research contributes more broadly to the field of Indigenous education research.

• Building the Indigenous Researcher profile within and outside of CDU through the employment of Indigenous researchers in the initiative, the RIRF, Research Us and participation in a number of national conferences this year, presented by West Arnhem WCE team in Darwin, Adelaide and Melbourne - “great presentation and lovely to see the whole integrated and considered approach.” See also Data Sources and References for more information.

• Responding to requests from other key Departmental staff to learn about our community engagement approach – for example, to support a new Family-Nurse Partnership program to be delivered in West Arnhem communities of Maningrida and Gunbalanya.
Key lessons

Below are listed some key lessons learnt 1) through the process of implementing the research, and 2) from the community members who engaged in the research itself. In addition, Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model is presented as a useful consideration; a systems theoretical framework that illustrates the complexity of the pursuit of further education in remote Indigenous contexts.

Lessons learnt through the process of implementation

- Facilitating ‘whole of community engagement’ was particularly challenging, given the multilingual, multi-clan presence in Maningrida. Engaging ARPnet to undertake research with representative family groups/individuals was one way to address this. The other was to ensure that we connected with as many service providers in community as we could.

- The location of WCE staff and the limitations on the WCE funding and timeframe impacted upon outcomes achievable. In the words of one TO, “How can you engage the community when you are not here? You should stay here”. WCE staff living in Darwin or on an outstation and working in, out and across two remote WCE communities was hugely challenging.

- Negotiating the Service Level Agreement with RIEL and MoU with ARPnet was complex and took several months to finalise. There were moments of confusion between ARPnet staff and WCE staff about their roles and focus, and the location of key ARPnet staff (overseas, interstate, or in other communities) at times made it difficult to resolve matters quickly and easily. A great deal of flexibility and professionalism was required to navigate this partnership.

- Concern continues to be raised at a community and WCE partnership level, as to how and whether this work is going to continue, given the HEPPP-funding of the WCE initiative ends this year. However, it is hoped that the draft action plan will be useful to guide continued discussions at the community-level, and that the information arising out of the work that has been passed through to WCE partners, will continue to initiate and support existing efforts to strengthen higher education pathways for remote Indigenous people.

- Whilst a WCE local governance group was not set up at the beginning of the initiative, it was interesting to note the desire by TOs/board members expressed in our final workshop to set up their own ‘Action Group’ to strengthen education pathways in community at the end of the initiative. The structure proposed is a committee of Indigenous representatives from each organisation in community to sit on this group, to discuss key issues, identify actions and monitor progress of the organisations towards strengthening education and training for people in Maningrida.

-Whilst WCE staff were invited to go out to visit the Homelands Teachers on some of Maningrida’s outstations, time and seasonal weather constraints meant they only had one opportunity to connect with these teachers (on one occasion when they came in to Maningrida).

- Very little time was available for writing up the final report, following the final community visit, and due to word limitations, the report provides a summary of research activities and outcomes. Despite the funding ending, the authors of the report hope to write and publish papers exploring the methodology and some of the key issues and recommendations in greater detail in 2017.
Lessons learnt through the research with community

- Education is a key priority for community leaders and traditional owners. In one community meeting (of over two hundred people), the following statements were publicly made:
  - “Education comes first. That building there [the school] is for kids.”
  - “It’s about time we re-educate our children.”
  - “I want to see my kids growing up right way.”
  - “We need a plan, how we are going to fix it up... to teach kids the proper way”.
- There are many issues identified by families in the ARPnet research that require attention and due consideration (see Appendix II).
- Education (both Balanda and Bininj) appears to be a priority for most remote Indigenous families and community members (see Appendix I).
- Not all non-Indigenous community members employed in Maningrida are supportive of, or feel adequately able to support, Indigenous education and training - “there are some people [Balanda] who support local people’s pathways, there are others who don’t see the point... They are judgemental, they don’t accept Aboriginal worldviews, they don’t understand that people move in and out of jobs and that they have cultural commitments.”
- Teachers at the school require support to strengthen educational opportunities for Maningrida school students (see Appendix IV).
- Cross-cultural training between Balanda and Bininj staff supports educational pathways ‘both ways’ - “I feel I need a better understanding of/support to learn about Indigenous culture in order to incorporate it into my teaching.”
- The drafting of a Community Education Action Plan was beneficial, shared back with key agencies (who participated and who were unable to attend). Interagency staff are talking about higher education pathways and some, have identified key actions for change. Some service providers have defined shared actions to strengthen education pathways (see Appendix V).
- Two opposing forces appear to be in operation – a government push to move people into hubs/ regional centres to live/study/work versus Indigenous people wanting to live/study/work on their homelands/country – what was commonly referred to in the ‘70s as the ‘Homelands Movement’. Some school students move in and out of Maningrida community impacting on attendance and resulting in ‘gaps’ in their education - “At certain times during the year, there are more children being educated on the homelands than there are in the School.”
- Mentoring relationships established with community members – past, current and potential higher education students has been valuable – demonstrated by youth making enquiries about higher education courses, and new enrolments from existing students interested in furthering their studies.

Figure 21: Students’ preferred choices of jobs mapped by Maningrida School (2014).
• Youth value the provision of learning opportunities that do not only occur in the classroom. Learning on country programs are one example of this. This is evident in the consistent high numbers of students surveyed by the school, who identify ‘Rangers’ as one of their top career choices, over the past two years.

• Many Indigenous people view ‘society’ and the education and government systems as problematic, where government position Indigenous people as having a problem - ‘a gap’ – that needs fixing/filling, without taking into account due consideration of the ever-changing policy context (in education, as well as employment, housing and so on) - “In the past we had really good bilingual education and school attendance was really good. In that time we treasured our language and culture and there was a lot of cultural activities in the school. We had Aboriginal dancing and we had children learning every song and dance from every culture. This is at the school I am talking about. Then somewhere along the line, something went wrong and children started dropping off, attendance was getting low…”

• Indigenous knowledge systems add value and benefit the education of Indigenous learners in the mainstream; the maintenance of first languages in education supports the acquisition of English language and literacy – “as an Indigenous teacher, I teach in English, but I check back with the kids that they have understood what I taught them in language.”

• Language, literacy and numeracy skills development in English is a priority and needs to embedded within ‘on the job training’ and accredited courses so that Indigenous people can move into roles, and up through roles into more senior positions of control in organisations (see Appendix I-III).

Situating higher education within the broader system

• Ecological systems theory – see diagram below – provides a useful framework in which to locate individuals in context.

• Education appears to be viewed by Indigenous people as a ‘collective’ rather than an ‘individual’ pursuit; and as such, it involves and is impacted upon by the ‘microsystem’ (e.g. family), the ‘exosystem’ (extended family, School Board, workplace e.g. school) and the ‘macrosystem’ (Balanda law; Bininj language, history and culture; socio-economic conditions).

• Education, in this way, cannot be viewed in isolation of other social and economic conditions – for example employment, housing, health, and safety.

![Diagram](image-url)
Future directions (recommendations)

The following combined recommendations arose out of discussions with service providers in workshops, traditional owners and key community leaders as well as WCE researcher reflections on family and community perspectives on education. See also Appendix III for ‘Recommendations’ highlighted by families in the ARPnet research.

It is the belief of the authors, that attention needs to focus on changes required at all levels of the ‘system’ – macrosystem, exosystem, and microsystem, not just at the individual level – in order to strengthen higher education pathways for remote Indigenous communities. Systems theory thus provides a useful framework in which to situate these recommendations, and as such, they have been organised according to the levels described in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model. The recommendations listed are both broad and specific, and listed in no particular order of priority.

1. Macrosystem (e.g. History, Laws, Culture, Economic system, Social conditions)

- An attitudinal shift is required from a deficit to a strengths-based focus, reflected in policy and practice, to create better education outcomes for Indigenous people.
- Coordination across Territory Departments and between State and Federal Departments is required, particularly between the NT DoE and Commonwealth Department of Education to advance Indigenous education in the best interests of remote Indigenous people.
- Partnership within and between Departments is required as education, employment, housing and so on are all issues that are linked.
- Policy-makers to involve key Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to design deliver and evaluate education policies and practices, in order that the particular issues experienced in remote Australia are reflected and addressed.
- More investment in homelands education is required – with learning on country-style programs – where young people can connect better to two-way learning opportunities, feel safe, access better health and wellbeing, connection to country, balance family and cultural commitments, reduce access to drugs and alcohol, and so on.
- More Indigenous politicians working across all government levels and working together with their non-Indigenous colleagues, to inform policy development, and practice.
- More funding and resources given to Aboriginal-controlled organisations to support their own education and training agendas.

2. Exosystem (e.g. Neighbourhoods, School board, Extended family, Parent’s work environment, Mass media)

- For Heads of Agency and operational staff to progress, monitor and further develop the actions drafted in the Community Education Action Plan.
- For community organisations to foster a culture of genuine ‘two way’ mentoring in their workplaces – to support intercultural communication, Bininj-Balanda knowledge and skill acquisition, relationships and partnerships – employees working with and alongside each other, ‘learning together’, equally valuing mainstream and Indigenous knowledges.
- For induction programs to be developed that all employees who are new to community are required to complete (e.g. new teachers) – that teach individuals about the community context,
to support the building of relevant cultural knowledge and to provide organisations with a mechanism to build relationships and support people in the most appropriate ways.

- To continue interagency workshops – to support service providers to work together and to monitor and evaluate the progress of these actions taken.
- Place-based community engagement positions required – to maintain CDU presence (or at least a minimum of five-ten years) to build good community understanding and knowledge about University and higher education.
- More engagement with remote Indigenous communities about education is required through initiatives like WCE, over a sustained period of time.
- This community engagement is required in order to continue existing relationships/partnerships (between WCE, WCE partners, government, community) – to strengthen and maintain education pathways.
- For the Maningrida community and the WCE partners to receive feedback – a response – from the Commonwealth Department of Education - on the WCE reports and to come out and talk to the communities; to continue the cycle: “We [researchers] were sent here to do a job. What is the point of the research if there is no follow up? Why invest in education research this way, if the government is not going to respond and take actions based on these recommendations?”
- For the WCE partners to provide feedback on the reports to the communities.
- For the Commonwealth Department of Education (DoE) to pass this information on to the NT DoE and other Ministers to talk to them about the recommendations and actions to be taken.
- For Maningrida community leaders and board members (e.g. BAC, Malabam, MPA) to sit down together and invite key politicians and ministers along to community to reflect on the report and WCE work together.
- To invest more in Learning on Country type-program delivery.
- Governance support, training and Indigenous and non-Indigenous champions required to support the education agenda.
- For NLC to consider their role and responsibility in supporting Bininj education pathways, within a community development function.
- For the WARC to review how far they have got with their newly implemented training program with embedded LLN and to work with staff to meet their training needs.
- For the two key educational institutions in the Northern Territory – CDU and BIITE - to review their remote VET delivery in community and to work together with service providers and community members to identify the best ways to support Indigenous learners to access and participate in further study opportunities.
- For CDU and BIITE to continue their advocacy with the government regarding the funding and provision of community-based training and education.
- For community organisations, CDU and BIITE to consider co-funding remote trainer roles in community, and scholarships for identified individuals.

3. Microsystem (e.g. Family, Peers, Siblings)

- More engagement with families required – to build trust and knowledge of what school and other agencies can provide in terms of education and training opportunities for local people.
4. Individual (e.g. child)

- More consultation with youth required – to build a better understanding of the reasons why young people are not attending school (as a means to better address school attendance issues) – e.g. funding the Youth Perspective on Education film project.

In the words of one community member: “This information comes from the heart now, and we want you to try and follow those issues and recommendations. Thank you.”
Data Sources

- Conference post-it evaluation, Nov 2016.
- Facebook Messages (various), Nov 2014-Dec 2016
- ‘Life Journeys: Pathways to Higher Education in Maningrida, report provided by ARPnet to WCE in May 2016.
- Ndjebbana Ngudja Facebook Page: The Ndjebbana language spoken in Maningrida Arnhem Land of the Kunibidji people. Captured through photos and text. Snapshots of language to share and use.
- Whole of Community Engagement Initiative: Developing pathways into higher education for remote Indigenous communities:
  https://remotengagetoedu.com.au and
References


*Figure 23: (L) Dean Yibarbuk and Millie Olcay; (R) Maningrida community members say, “OK, Good Work!”*
APPENDIX I

Selection of quotes from families and community, recorded by ARPnet

“Government changing, future is coming back to old days, if kids not going to school, the parents not getting money. The parents are forcing kids to go back to school, same as in the old days.”

“Well - got kids to look after and need to get more education to learn both way Bininj high education Balanda way.”

“Yeah violence, kids not going to school.”

“Drugs, alcohol, family problem, kids sniffing.”

“Young married/violence/gambling.”

“Problem kids are doing wrong things.”

“Not enough support or education.”

“Family too much not to have go far for balanda education any further.”

“My ceremony maybe too far.”

“Balanda law, us Bininj want to learn more Bininj way.”

“Balanda not teaching us right, reading and writing is not good enough.”

“Getting married early.”

“Family matters.”

“Family worry too much.”

“We do need help to do Balanda education.”

“Changing the age to give the right [chance] to repeat year level.”

“Young people are not like old people working for a long time, young they like school here, before they didn’t go to school, nothing only learning from old people.”

“Still want to learn sometimes but I have family problems/young married or no job.”

“Yeah I would let my girls do more studying so they can come back and help, and also they can do Balanda one, study and our Bininj knowledge. They can come back and learn our culture way, they can go and study.”

“Biggest mob been to school but no job. Many of them been to school but don’t work I know. Lots of them young people, no school, no job, lots of young people walking around all night, some never went to school, no job, just wanna sit at home.”
We love the idea of big education, further education, higher education, but the reality of this is there are no jobs for our kids in this community. Our so-called leaders with many hats, they don’t support our community in the right way, they don’t support our young leaders, they forever listen to the balanda. They are not thinking about the future for this place. And also they think about themselves, where they stand with balanda not with the cultural leaders for this community. That is why our community is going down... This community a lot of Balanda come in this community and they have no cultural awareness training. This community is going backwards in terms of education, employment wise and housing, it is going down... just a head count of balanda tell a story of high employment, high number of Balanda in employment.”

“Maningrida going backwards, that’s it, full stop from me. Until there is a Bininj running clinic, I will go dance there; Bininj running arts and crafts, I will clap; black CEO at Bawinanga; Bininj way, Bininj ideas, that’s what we want. If they say education is the key, give them the opportunity to further education and give them a job. Why are they allowing our kids to further education but there is no follow up, we don’t like what we see, they the Balanda are not giving us the opportunity. Always Balanda got to be in front leading us. Trying to stand up for rights is getting us nowhere.”

“... if our kids are given a fair go and after their higher education they get a job and move on. If you are thinking of higher education, please have a job for them. Find out what their skills are or give them on the job training whether it be office or cleaning, give them more opportunities for training. There is no future in Maningrida, without the young being considered the right way in our own community which is rightfully ours, and we have to run all our businesses ourselves, not someone else who is making us look like we all mild. Every little job you see there is no Bininj boss, we gotta change all that.”

“I think that is right, some don’t really like to learn our way, young people. They should be doing our culture, like dancing, ceremony, hunting should be out with old people so old people can talk to them instead of hanging around, breaking in and stealing, should be learning our way, Bininj culture...”

“have more babies but they are not ready to look after kids”

[in relation to government pushing education it is like... “you mob need eat when you don’t feel hungry or you don’t like tucker that they give you.”

“Aboriginal people aren’t dumb, they are smart... The government needs to have understanding of Indigenous people and not just seeing us as drunks with no jobs, who can’t express feelings, and here we are being forced to live the Balanda way of life. Give us funding if you want us to understand the white man’s system, we all the same, different colours but we have all got feelings.... There is real intelligence in Bininj people.”

“We see Balanda managing, we should see Bininj managing or helping. Bininj should go with him, Balanda should be teaching him, not going on his own.”

“Yes they call you Balanda”

“Yes they say you learning more balanda way”

“Yes you are mixing culture”
“I think some Balanda be alright (are okay) when get together with Bininj. Not just all Balanda, it is good to learn both ways. We need to get more balanda education to help us (ourselves). Some Bininj don’t get us when we talk, they have to get balanda to do it.”

“Bininj people look at what you got (you have) more Balanda in you; and because you will have more power and influence I guess.”

“Some people think like to lose our culture; some people think we lose culture.”

“People sometimes we lose future of balanda not learning Bininj… People sometimes we lose culture because of Balanda, not learning Bininj.”

“Yes they [the kids] do ask why [education] for school or for work it is important to learn more Bininj and Balanda way.”

“Not really good to learn only Balanda education, important to learn white and black, two ways”

“... the Bininj way of education is not Balanda way. We know that it will be ok, how our way, the Bininj way is ok, and it is the only way in Maningrida community.”

“Whatever education they are giving at school is not working, we don’t see our young educated children come home and have high jobs and suitable jobs. There should be a follow for that child, a job once they get that certificate. The education system is neglecting our children, what I can see is that they really are neglecting our children. When they come back here there is no follow up, where is the help?”

“Our teenagers, 16-18, when they... go to next level they find it is hard and they drop out. They don’t have the option to repeat, the school just looks at your age. We want our children leaving school reading and writing, but no they kick them out at the age of 18 with no literacy and numeracy. They leave school because they find it too hard.”

“Balanda education is good, it is very good but Bininj education is more important. You gotta know your culture and your boundaries and your land. And to be a strong leader and if you haven’t got any culture or land you haven’t got anything, you haven’t got any competition, because that what the government is about. It is an achievement, we got it and government needs to give us a chance with funding. We got our language, our land from our old people or otherwise we wouldn’t be recognised as TOs. We get that from our grandfather, grandmother, aunties, uncles, where they light the way before us doing or knowing…”

“In the past we had really good bilingual education and school attendance was really good. In that time we treasured our language and culture and there was a lot of cultural activities in the school. We had Aboriginal dancing and we had children learning every song and dance from every culture. This is at the school I am talking about. Then somewhere along the line, something went wrong and children started dropping off, attendance was getting low…”

“I need education, because everything and writing is in English”

“I would like to search for a job”

“To get better job with better pay”

“I want to get a job and need more education and yes, I want to work”
“we need more education, give us more education, more education in the balanda way.”

“I need my kids to get better education, I don’t want my kids taken away. I want them here to be educated.”

“More education for our land and helping this community and future kids.”

Need for greater engagement between Bininj and Balanda.

“Bininj need to learn more Balanda but some Balanda also need to learn our Bininj way.”

“Bininj to learn more Balanda but some Balanda not learning our Bininj way”

“More funding for us (Bininj) people, to learn to read and write”

“Work ‘with’ Bininj mob”

“Give us chance to work well between Balanda and Bininj”

“Bininj can run own country in our own way without Balanda”

“I don’t know what grade they went to and that time I think there wasn’t enough higher education when they went to pass through that grade. There was nothing else for them to do. They just went home, there was no training. Some went to Kormilda College and came back, no job. There was no on the job training for them to do. And where they could get a job no one could train them and give them a stable job to do. Otherwise our young students would have been trained and taken over to prove and take over that job.

No one wanted to take us, maybe they were afraid to train them, I don’t know because if you were trained and qualified you would come back and get a job. But they come back to nothing, most of them go on to Centrelink. The jobs that are available just went to the Balanda not our Bininj kids... Balanda should move and give room to our kids, give that child a chance but nothing like that is happening here, what you find is still lack of employment for young people, a waste of education, wasted opportunities, they had the education, western education but no fair go for employment and there is too many (not to be racist) balanda passing on jobs to their friends when we have our own kids who are capable... I have seen things go from better to worse, to more worse today. I have seen with my own eyes. From school, the big question is, where would them kids go. We have been invaded by balanda in Maningrida community. I have seen it and it’s sad, it’s a sad thing for me because... I was educated, I got good job... most of our kids they study and they come back to no job... I have never seen an educated young Aboriginal person run anything in this community, nothing, our own kids.”

“education is too much balanda now, balanda way now... We need Bininj too, yes, Bininj education is more important, sometime if they learn Balanda way, otherwise they get the memory out for Bininj way. Families teach Bininj education, like in Bininj way important for them young people, like teach them language, ceremony too, they become strong person, like they can look after the land, we can teach them Balanda way our way...”

“Find it hard to find job here”

“I need a job, help for getting good services in the community, getting in to attend meetings and learning through leadership programs”
APPENDIX II

Issues impacting on education, documented by ARPnet

- Young people do not have clear vision of a career path they wish to follow
- Need more focused discussions about career pathways and education
- Take over some of the jobs held by balanda
- Strong perceptions that there are no jobs in remote communities
- No jobs = no incentives to get educated
- Too many balanda have the jobs in community
- Local people with same skills as balanda but do not get the jobs
- RJCP/CDP influences what jobs people end up doing
- Over-trained but still no job
- More education to improve literacy and numeracy
- Improved quality of education
- More skills training needed
- Barriers to education are real and occur at various points along the life journey of people in community
- Basic numeracy and literacy is a requirement of a job
- Participation in ceremony is an issue for most families
- Ceremony is a legitimate educational experience
- School attendance low
- Improving reading and writing
- Need for both ways education – to engage in local economy and to meet cultural obligations
- Both ways education has a lot of support
- Want kids to perform better and get a good education
- Concerned that the community environment does not support getting a good education
- The curriculum delivers balanda education which is not always relevant for everyday life or for getting jobs
- Outstation education has more benefits - better option for education, higher expected outcomes
- Will getting an education result in getting a job?
- Concerned about the jobs in community
- School in Noni is a good example of bush education
- Forced to drop out of school to meet cultural obligations
- Tension between balanda and bininj education – especially for those who went through mission days
- Not much time for elders to pass on knowledge if they wait for kids to complete balanda education
- Issue of identity [of being educated] – how people see you in community
- Kids not getting real education
- In community, your knowledge and practice of lore defines you much more than your level of education
- Distance to higher education institutions – away from home and social networks therefore people worry about homesickness
- Substance abuse among youth
- Youth drop out from school
- Early marriages and pregnancies
- Stereotypes about Aboriginal attitudes towards education
- Different quality of education delivered to Aboriginal kids
- The force government uses to get children to school
- Grandparents wanting to educate the young people on Aboriginal lore and ceremony
• The dominance of Balanda in jobs in rural/remote communities
• For some the perceived impact on education; being educated means….
  o Becoming more Balanda
  o Losing your Bininj identity
  o Rejecting culture
  o Getting bullied for being different/more Balanda
  o Being too balanda or balanda-like
APPENDIX III

Recommendations to strengthen education, documented by ARPnet:

- *It is about life journeys, not just pathways to higher education*
- Adult education – especially literacy and numeracy
- Computer skills
- Administration skills (completing forms, emails and using telephones)
- Land management training
- Enterprise development/business training
- Governance training
- Mechanics training for vehicles maintenance
- Balanda to teach or mentor Bininj person so that transfer of skills into existing jobs happens
- Alternative education streams
- Boarding school
- Can a young person be set on a path for a specific, targeted job in community or elsewhere?
## Teacher Reflections in Maningrida

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the most important thing you have learnt from listening to community voices today?</th>
<th>What opportunities are there for you and your workplace to best support education pathways?</th>
<th>What support do you need to help you provide these opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Working together – understanding each culture.</td>
<td>• More education.</td>
<td>• Teacher training in ESL. • Smaller class sizes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More welfare! Grants to organise jobs for locals.</td>
<td>• Language and culture group (but it’s only once a week).</td>
<td>• Teachers to have more support from community to help them learn two ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jobs/careers - maybe articulate career (i.e. series of stepping stones to doing what you love and getting paid for it.</td>
<td>• Develop ATs: – stronger role models; develop skill and confidence of future local teachers.</td>
<td>• Being recognised by Management of the skill sets you have that can offer – VET/Vocational Ed/Enterprise e.g. Good Food Kitchen training for hospitality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many different voices and opinions – confusing.</td>
<td>• Whole community policy on how to create/provide job/higher education pathways and mentoring</td>
<td>• A more structured way to support and include Teacher Assistants into my classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There seems to be some unknowns about the school and what it offers and how it supports staff, students, families in their wellbeing and education.</td>
<td>• Working with local agencies on local pathways and supporting students in external pathways</td>
<td>• School needs to support more 2 way learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We need to have an adult education centre ASAP. This will support the attendance gap if students can extend their learning.</td>
<td>• Utilising skills of huge variety of people in and out of workplace</td>
<td>• That more understanding, actions, and conversation needed. • Education and connection to people, resources. • Broader experience/ mindset. • Cultural change in education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the most important thing you have learnt from listening to community voices today?</td>
<td>What opportunities are there for you and your workplace to best support education pathways?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Working together – families and teachers to educate students.</td>
<td>• A generally supportive Maningrida community - tap into both resources both ways.</td>
<td>• More dialogue like today.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• I think we need more community involvement at the government level regarding education</td>
<td>• Someone who could provide career counselling to students.</td>
<td>• Homelands education and more support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• It seems there is a long way to go.</td>
<td>• Mentor the support workers through their work and study. I can do this daily so the position is sustained by a local.</td>
<td>• I feel I need a better understanding of/ support to learn about Indigenous culture in order to incorporate it into my teaching.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| • There are still many barriers both ways to overcome. | • Flexibility and innovation in developing pathways.  
• Ongoing collaboration to find the best pathways. | • More dialogue with community. |
<p>| | | • |
| • People are afraid to lose their culture but even not learning properly balanda ways they are losing their own. Balanda learn their ‘other’ culture at home. | • More education opportunities for young adults (1st) e.g. TAFE with real job opportunities and applicable skills. | • Batchelor programs need to work/be delivered with employee context – at the moment, doesn’t align. |
| | | • |
| • To confirm who I am here for. The kids as a priority – to have ability and options when engaging with Balanda culture in the future. | • Invite persons to give inspiration speeches – as role models. | • Develop literacy and numeracy programs that upskills ATs/local school employees. |
| | | • |
| • People (Bininj) DO care about education and they are aware of the issues especially things that block or disable them. | • Mentorship programmes. | • People need to come to the ‘job they want’ – be proactive, don’t expect to be given it. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the most important thing you have learnt from listening to community voices today?</th>
<th>What opportunities are there for you and your workplace to best support education pathways?</th>
<th>What support do you need to help you provide these opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Community concerns about their identity and the perceived impact of education | • Student/teacher mentor program.  
• Teach PLP looking at goals and workplace culture.  
• Development of job skills and literacy. | • Need support of Batchelor Institute to guide myself and workers – moral support of other staff. |
| • That Bininj people do not feel the current education system is providing the necessary skills to achieve success in the Balanda world. | • More parent and community involvement in school. | • More private industries to provide jobs. |
| • It confirmed everything I already believed. | • Cultural awareness of all staff. |  |
| • The community is worried about the gap between balanda and non-balanda and do feel disadvantaged. | • To get out and do ‘life’ with the kids and the parents. |  |
| • Listening to community voices is essential for development of best practice to enable best pathways. | |  |
### APPENDIX V

**Draft Community Education Action Plan – supporting education pathways in Maningrida**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT action should be taken?</th>
<th>WHO should do this work?</th>
<th>HOW will this happen?</th>
<th>WHEN will we do this?</th>
<th>BENEFITS - what we hope to see when this action is taken?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employ and mentor locals (grandparents, parents and carers of kids at the school and in community).</td>
<td>Catholic Care Family Educator in collaboration with the school and Batchelor Institute.</td>
<td>On the job training and mentoring with work and study.</td>
<td>Now and ongoing.</td>
<td>Indigenous people doing on the job training and mentoring to help build stronger parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace skill set review – development strategy at Child and Family Centre (CFC).</td>
<td>Senior Management, Room Supervisors and CFC personnel.</td>
<td>Identify skill sets, knowledge needed in work/positions. Discover staff knowledge of their work requirements.</td>
<td>In Term 4: Staff Questionnaire. Work with Senior Mgt to identify/compile skill sets for each position.</td>
<td>Better informed employees of their work requirements and pre-requisites for particular employment/jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote understanding of multiple aspects to, and potential outcomes of/from Higher Education and how that can/does operate and exist in the community;</td>
<td>Education organisations: The School -Higher Ed providers in community -Tertiary Institutions operating in community; Researchers.</td>
<td>Workshop with institutions who have a presence in community; Range of perspectives: local people who are already employed or engaged in research or who have higher ed qualifications;</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Understanding of employment pathways linked to higher education (e.g. like how to become a researcher themselves – like Dean!) and what this might achieve;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education awareness introduced at the school:</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is it? What pathways exist? What is research? Why is it done? Why are Balandas conducting research in community?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Units or workshops developed to incorporate into school curriculum/programs including mapping of pathways to higher ed and beyond;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement of families etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>People understand who researchers are, what research is and is for, able to make informed decisions about whether they want to participate in it, if future opportunities arise, how their participation data might be used, what the implications are etc;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding of why research is done.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change [BAC] organisational culture.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board, Managers, all employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State organisation values;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise cultural awareness;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce Cultural Mentors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bininj ownership of organisation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Bininj employment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education content to be relevant for employment in Early Childhood.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Families as First Teachers (FaFT) Family Educator in collaboration with Middle Years and Senior Teachers, supported by local Playgroup Leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Health Unit targeting ‘Teen Mums’;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons delivered by Family Educator, Family Liaison Officers and Playgroup Leaders to those that can see and be prepared for motherhood and/or work in Early Childhood at FaFT or CFC; and Abecedarian approach delivered by Family Liaison Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4 – development of Health Unit;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 1, 2017 – delivery of Health Unit;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2 – Delivery of 3a (FaFT program).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young teens can see benefits of Early Learning and be inspired by working in that space and/or be prepared for motherhood;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See options for education pathways after becoming a mother – with support from FaFT, Crèche and Teachers within CFC. Transfer of positive experiences onto the child.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme

Whole of Community Engagement Initiative

www remotengagetoedu com au
Tennant Creek and Alekarenge Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Evaluation Report

Report prepared by David Scholz, Valda Shannon and Geoffrey Shannon
This Emu foot demonstrates how education links to direct employment, the metaphor was often used by Valda Shannon to describe WCE work in Tennant Creek and Alekarange.

Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.

DISCLAIMER

This report was written by the stated authors and does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative of the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership of Charles Darwin University. It provides multiple perspectives and reflections on engagement with a range of stakeholders over time and is not intended to be definitive, comprehensive or imply community consensus with the views expressed.

Warning: Images of deceased persons may appear in this report.

SUGGESTED CITATION

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Project Metaphor

The WCE team in Tennant Creek / Alekarenge has used a bird metaphor based on the Zebra Finch (*Taeniopygia guttata*) also known Nyinngirri in Waramungu.

![Zebra finches](image)

**Figure 1: Zebra finches.**

Birds, and the bird’s nest, represent children, their carers and the education system supporting their development and education.

The nest represents the safe, positive and nurturing environment that begins in the home (where the eggs are hatched), continues through the school system and then further education, preparing them for their roles as employees in the modern workforce. As they develop in this system they take small, continuous increases in responsibility and gradually become more independent. When they complete their qualifications and are ready for work, it represents the stage when the birds have learnt to fly and leave the nest for their own life. They metaphorically fly away to a career as a strong and independent individual.

Over this journey, the nest represents the broader community working with the family to build that safe learning environment. As nests are made up many different materials in nature - for example twigs, leaves, grass, spider-web and bark – so too is the learning environment made up of many efforts including that of families, community workers, health professionals, government agencies as well as teachers. Collectively the community works together to build the learning environment. Teachers and schools are important but cannot succeed if the other elements are missing.

Seeds are the primary diet of the finches and education is like the seeds of knowledge. Getting a daily dose of knowledge builds strong and prosperous students. Birds feed on different seeds to get a balanced diet. Different seeds represent both traditional and western knowledge – both are important for a balanced education. Many traditional aspects can only be learnt on country with elders and this must be woven into the Indigenous education narrative.

Cats and loss of natural food are considered to be the primary threats to finches. There are similar risks to education. There are various predatory ‘cats’ that disrupt education including poverty, poor health, drugs and alcohol as well as teenage pregnancy. Not going to school (or college or university) is like losing your educational food which leads to weakness and failure until you seek change. However a good supportive environment can keep you strong and feeding on knowledge, sustaining life-long learning and growth.

Zebra finches are loud and boisterous singers. This signifies the need for communication in the community to keep a strong learning environment. Indigenous education is at risk and needs a strong voice.
Valda Napurrula Shannon Wandaparri is a Walpiri/Warumungu woman who has been living and working in Jurnkurakurr (Tennant Creek) since 1992.

Valda has completed Bachelor of Applied Science in Aboriginal Community Management and Development from Curtin University in 2000 and also Bachelor of Arts and Education Deakin University 1987. Valda has also completed training through the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters as well as a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

Valda worked as a teacher at Ali Curung School in 1986 – 1992 and became Assistant-Principal-in-training at the same school.

Valda’s most recent work has included writing culturally relevant programs for the Mental Health Association of Central Australian Suicide Prevention initiative (based in Alice Springs). This led her to draw on culture to connect with communities. She then presented her work in New York at the United Nations Indigenous Forum in 2014 on the importance of addressing suicide through cultural practices in Indigenous communities. Valda has also had her stories incorporated in a book titled ‘Women’s Voices’ as part of the International Women’s Conference in Beijing, China in 1995.

Valda’s focus is on ‘walking in confidence in two worlds’; embedding Indigenous culture within education, employment and processes to strengthen her community.


He was an Assistant Teacher (cat. 1) in 1979 and in 1980 was based in Yirara College, Alice Springs. Then he studied Assistant Teacher training at Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) in 1981, 1983 and 1985. In 1982 and 1984, Geoffrey taught as an assistant teacher at Yirara. In 1986, he was a student at Darwin Institute of Technology, which is now Charles Darwin University. Geoffrey studied for twelve months in the teacher education program. At the end of 1986 he graduated with a Diploma of Teaching.
Since then, Geoffrey has worked in different fields:
1987 — Worked as a teacher at Alekarengge—Principal in Training.
1993 — Voluntary worker on Julalikari Council (Julalikari) Night Patrol.
1994—98 - Assistant Administration Officer at Anyinginyi Health while studying at Curtin University.
1999—2001 - Worked at Julalikari Night Patrol.
2000-2002 – Cert III Mental Health Lecturer at BIITE.
2003—2004 - Day Patrol Officer with Julalikari.
2005—2006 – Men's Liaison Officer
2007—2008 - Project Coordinator for the Ready for School Initiative
2008—Current – WCE Community Cultural Advisor and Liaison Officer at Julalikari

David Scholz brings more than 15 years of experience in health, community development, policy reform and research administration to the WCE program. He has extensive primary health care experience, which has fostered interest in the health-education nexus as well as the social determinants of health. Working in both government- and community-organisations has given David significant community engagement and community development experience across diverse populations in Central Australia and the Top End. In the last 3 years he has worked in senior research administration roles at CDU giving him a broad base of research, project design and grant development skills in the VET / higher education space. He has a particular interest in Indigenous health, education and research in remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory (NT). This includes online learning, inclusive practice and community engagement, governance and community development.

David has a Master of Business Administration (Change Management) degree and is a Fellow with the Australian Institute of Management with a background in health science (nursing).
Staff involved in establishment / intermediate phases of the project

**Peta Fraser** was involved in the establishment and intermediate phases of the project from October 2014 to May 2016. She is a proud Bundjalung woman from the Lismore area. Peta has worked in IT, marketing, and local government in New South Wales (NSW). From 2008 she worked in the NT with Outback Stores and Ironbark Employment. In her role with Ironbark Recruitment, Peta specialised in Indigenous Employment Programs.

Peta holds a Certificate III in Business and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

**Dr Lisa Watts** (MA (hons), PhD) was involved in the establishment phase of the Tennant Creek project until May 2015, and has worked in remote Indigenous communities of the NT for thirty years specialising in applied research across education, political ecology, and social and emotional wellbeing, community development and social enterprise. She has worked on a number of engagement projects, collaborating with multi-government stakeholders, institutions and agencies, the Warlpiri, Anmatyerre peoples and the Yugul Mangi collective, influencing policy on water management.
Project Background

Activity in the Tennant Creek Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative has sought to identify the barriers to uptake of further education for Indigenous students in Tennant Creek and Alekerange (and by extension the broader Barkly Region) as well as the opportunities to increase the number of students pursuing further education. For the purposes of this project further education was defined as one of the following 3 streams:

1. Higher Education (HE);
2. Vocational Education and Training (VET); and
3. Direct Employment (with on the job training).

Superficially HE and VET providers can assist in this process by offering a range of support services including the following:

- Indigenous student services and support programs;
- Indigenous access programs;
- Indigenous studies and Indigenous designated programs;
- Healthcare programs; and
- Indigenous teacher education programs.

These types of support services have been offered by Australian and international HE/VET providers for a number of years now. It can be argued that Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) and Charles Darwin University (CDU) have been at the forefront of these initiatives. However it is apparent that for BIITE and CDU these programs are more effective in their major campuses and centres, as the more remote students experience greater difficulty in accessing these services for a variety of reasons.

A number of studies, both nationally and internationally, identify a range of broader challenges to the uptake of further education for Indigenous populations. These include the following:

- **Language**: the first language of many Indigenous people who live in remote communities is not English which is the main language of instruction. This includes in-class or on-line lectures and almost all printed course material.

- **Financial Barriers**: financial challenges are a key reason for students not starting or completing further education.

- **Discrimination**: international research shows that former Indigenous further education students were less likely to report experiencing a “climate free from harassment or discrimination” than non-Indigenous students (Boughton, 1999).

- **Family & cultural responsibilities**: personal challenges and family responsibilities are commonly cited to explain why Indigenous students are unable to enter or continue with their education. Stress, lack of family support, problems related to substance abuse, childcare and family concerns are a few examples of these challenges and responsibilities.

- **Lack of role models**: as relatively few Indigenous people from remote communities have pursued further education in the past, particularly at the university level, Indigenous students have fewer role models and supports in place to encourage them to continue their schooling.
• **Rurality and remoteness:** Indigenous communities are often geographically remote, and poorly supported by critical infrastructure such as high speed broadband. Even when high speed internet access is available it is often not at an affordable price-point. Generally students must leave their communities and/or families to study in an unfamiliar urban environment.

The 2012 Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People revealed that the percentage of Indigenous students in universities across Australia was barely 1%. The Indigenous completion rate pre-review was 32.4%. Data released in 2015 from the Australian Government Department of Education and Training shows the situation was relatively unchanged, with 1% of Indigenous students across Australia and a 28% completion rate.

The WCE initiative is based on a commitment to interculturality where traditional Indigenous and western knowledge systems come together and reinforce one another. Koegeler-Abdi and Parncutt (2013) look at the intersection of cultures and examine how practice meets the research. They propose that solutions to intercultural challenges can be approached best by a combination of equality and strategy:

- Equality gives all relevant parties equality of opportunity; and
- Strategy involves rational development of approaches that take advantage of the knowledge and experience of all relevant actors.

Moore, Shannon and Scholz (2016) propose that acknowledging interculturality is critical to developing sustainable solutions in an increasingly diverse environment.
Community Context

Tennant Creek is located approximately 500km north of Alice Springs on the Stuart Highway. Road access to Alice Springs is good all year round. The town lies within the Central Land Council (CLC) region 6.

Tennant Creek town was named in 1860 after John Tennant, a South Australian pastoralist, by John McDougall Stuart, in acknowledgement of the assistance Mr. Tennant had provided for Stuart’s expeditions across Australia. Tennant Creek was declared a town in 1934 in the midst of a gold rush, and gold-mining became the driving force of the local economy. The town did not accommodate Indigenous residents until the 1960’s.

Mining has traditionally been the backbone of the local economy along with pastoralism and the public service. At present there is a very low level of mining activity and public administration is the major employer, comprising 24.2% of the workforce. The town has a diverse history shaped by mining, pastoralists and Indigenous culture.

A number of Indigenous languages are spoken in Tennant Creek and surrounding regions including Warumungu, Warlpiri, Alyawarr, Warlmanpa, Wambaya, Wakaya, Waanyi, and Kaytetye. Alekerange is located 170km south of Tennant Creek by road.

Indigenous History

Tennant Creek lies centrally in Warumungu country but had few Indigenous residents for the first half of its official history. In the 1970’s Indigenous people began to move or return to Tennant Creek from Alekerange (formerly known as Ali Curung and Warrabri Indigenous settlement) as well as surrounding cattle stations.

Thirty years after being named by Stuart, it is estimated that 100 people were living at camps around the Tennant Creek Telegraph Station in 1890. People were attracted primarily by station work or the distribution of rations as well as to the perennial waterholes along the creek north of town. These waterholes were used traditionally by Warumungu people during drought years.

The discovery of gold in the 1930’s brought an influx of prospectors from across the country. Many of the new mines were located on land that had previously been the Warumungu Reserve and meant that some Indigenous people became involved in mining. Similarly the discovery of tungsten ( wolfram) at Hatcher’s Creek in 1913 brought the Warumungu and Alyawarre people into mines in the Davenport & Murchinson Ranges. The original Pioneer Mine at Hatches Creek operated through until 1970. At present the GWR Group is looking at new mines in the region.

Many Indigenous people spent substantial periods of their lives in this region including on Kurandi Station. The station is notable for an Indigenous walk-off in 1977 as part of strike action, although it is not nearly as well known as the Wave Hill event.

Substantial swathes of Indigenous land were granted as pastoral leases and were stocked from the 1880’s onwards. This development of their lands made traditional Indigenous hunting and gathering practices impractical, if not impossible, and people settled on the Warumungu Reserve, the new cattle stations or the reserve. Consequently Indigenous people formed the basis of the station workforce from droving through to domestic duties although conditions were generally very poor and payment was made only in rations.
Tennant Creek & Alekarenge Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Evaluation Report

The current approximate population of Tennant Creek (ABS, 2016) is 3,634 with a modest male bias (51.0% male and 49.0% female). The median age is 32.5 years, which is significantly lower than the Australian median (37.3). In 2011, 52% of the total population was Indigenous.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2016) data highlights that Tennant Creek is made up largely of young to middle aged Indigenous residents and working to older aged non-Indigenous residents. In the Indigenous population this is coherent with relatively high birth rates and lower life expectancy. For the non-Indigenous population it is likely that the moderately high concentration of pre-retirement aged people reflects the age profile of employment.

The population of Alekerange is approximately 535.

Work by Biddle (2009) clearly shows the Barkly region was in the most disadvantaged quartile (4th) in 1991 and that there was no change in 2006. The MySchool website shows that in 2015, 70% of the Tennant Creek High School student cohort was in the most disadvantaged quartile (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2016). This is very important for the context of this report.

The American Psychologists Association (2016) reports that low socio-economic status and correlated factors such as lower education, poverty, and poor health affect society as a whole. Inequitable wealth/resource distribution and discrepancies in quality of life are increasing globally.

Research by Morgan et al (2009) reveals that children from low socio-economic status communities develop academic skills more slowly compared to areas of higher rank. Initial academic skills are linked to the community/household environment. In these communities, generally low literacy levels and high levels of stress negatively impacted children’s baseline academic skills. Children in remote Indigenous communities such as Tennant Creek and Alekarenge are starting from a compromised base and the gap can get progressively larger without thoughtful intervention.

Educational Context

Tennant Creek has two publicly funded schools, Tennant Creek Primary School and Tennant Creek High School that service the town and, to some extent, the surrounding Barkly region. The regional function applies more in the case of the high school. Alekerange School provides education services to students from preschool to middle years.

Tennant Creek town is serviced by the Northern Territory’s (NT) two HE / VET providers, BIITE and CDU. Both BIITE and CDU have reduced their footprint in Tennant Creek over the life of this project, although CDU maintains a centre there. BIITE shares a single office with the NT Department of Education.

Pre-school services are offered by the primary school and there is childcare available at the Tennant Creek Childcare Centre.

Tennant Creek Primary School

Tennant Creek Primary School is a large, remote primary school providing pre- and primary school education for Tennant Creek and the Mungkarta Homeland Centre. The stated aim is to offer a comprehensive education to a student cohort which comes from widely diverse backgrounds. It is an Accelerated Literacy (AL) school and staff seek to develop school programs that support and enhance AL.

From the 2014 Annual Report the school states:
‘We see ourselves as a full service school; we pick students up in the morning and take them home after school. We supply breakfast, recess and lunch to students through a comprehensive nutrition program.’

Tennant Creek Primary School provides education to 413 students from Transition to Year 6. Officially, 75% of students are Indigenous but if full attendance was achieved across the population this would be closer to 85%. It has total income of approximately $1.5m (excluding core salary costs) and 25 teaching staff (including principal and deputy principal).

**Tennant Creek High School**

Tennant Creek High School is located in Tennant Creek and provides education services from Years 7 to 12. Enrolments in recent years average around 200 and vary according to community circumstances. The official Indigenous student population is approximately 75% of the total student body but if full enrolment was achieved this would be more than 80%. Students come from the urban and town camp areas of Tennant Creek as well as surrounding remote communities. It services students with an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) rating of 722.

Tennant Creek High School provides middle and senior year education. Senior year students can study a combination of school based subjects, Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses on site through CDU, and correspondence courses through the Northern Territory Open Education Centre. School-based apprenticeships provide an additional pathway for senior students. All students in the senior school are encouraged to enrol in at least one VET program as part of their learning program. The Alternate Program uses preparation for the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award as a structure to allow students to obtain various skills such as horse-riding and swimming.

It has an average staffing of 40-45 people comprising 26 teaching staff and 18 administrative or support staff with a total income of approximately $1.2m per annum exclusive of core salary costs.

**Alekerange School**

Alekerange School has an average staffing of 7 teaching staff and 2 non-teaching staff. It has 117 total enrolments for years pre-school to Year 9.

**Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)**

BIITE describes itself as ‘sitting uniquely in the Australian educational landscape’ as the only Indigenous dual sector tertiary education provider (BIITE, 2016). It promotes its ‘both-ways’ philosophy through providing an Indigenous lens to a mainstream education system.

As an organisation BIITE remains in a process of reform. It is undergoing substantial change at present including a move towards becoming a ‘social enterprise’, applying commercial strategies to achieve socially beneficial objectives for Indigenous communities. The aim is to create a more sustainable and innovative business model.

BIITE offers a range of VET programs including business, community services, education, health and literacy. Details can be found here. Higher education options are focused on three key areas – education, health and Indigenous knowledges as well as a Preparation for Tertiary Success bridging program. It is also possible to do a Masters by research or a Doctor of Philosophy.

1 Both-ways philosophy refers to a way of working that respects both Indigenous and Western cultures (Yunupingu, 1991)
At the time of preparing this report BIITE had one staff member based in Tennant Creek who had a sole focus on Assistant Teacher development and travelled extensively in the region.

**Charles Darwin University (CDU)**

CDU describes itself as somewhat unique in that no other single Australian university serves such a large area of the continent, in such a remote location and with such a small population to sustain it.

The only university based in the NT, CDU is a dual sector university providing VET and HE pathways. The university is engaged with, and informed by, Australia’s Indigenous people through the agency of the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership (OPVC-IL) and other research institutes.

Similar to BIITE, CDU offers a range of VET programs including business, primary industries, trades, community services, education, health, and creative arts. Details can be found here. Higher education options are quite broad covering health, business, law, education, arts, humanities, engineering, science, health, emergency management and Indigenous knowledges. These are outlined here. CDU’s bridging program is known as the Tertiary Enabling Program. The university also has a growing research program offering Masters and PhD qualifications.

Charles Darwin University operates a centre in Tennant Creek offering facilities for local students and a point of contact for the public. At present only one full-time staff member is based in town, although VET and HE providers visit most weeks - either from Alice Springs or Darwin.

**Local Governance Structure**

A number of governance structures oversee local governance processes and these can be divided into three main classes:

- Formal local government
- Indigenous land tenure and development
- Schools and significant Indigenous service provider organisations

The Barkly Regional Council was created on 1st July 2008 and was formerly known as Barkly Shire Council. At the time of creation it was the second largest local government area in Australia at 323,514km², after East Pilbara shire in Western Australia at 380,000km². It is now the fourth largest.

The council contains Local Authorities that represent local communities and towns. This reflects the developing regional responsibility of the Barkly Regional Council.

The Barkly Regional Council is divided into four wards, and is governed by a President and 12 Councillors:

- Alyawarr Ward (4)
- Patta Ward (5)
- Alpurrurulam Ward (1)
- Yapakurlangu Ward (2)

Tennant Creek township is part of the Patta Ward which has 40% Indigenous representation. Alekarenge is situated in the Alyawarr Ward and has 100% Indigenous representation.
Indigenous land tenure and development is controlled by 2 main entities - the Central Land Council and Patta Aboriginal Corporation.

The Central Land Council provides a number of services for the benefit of traditional owners and other Indigenous residents of the CLC Tennant Creek region, including the following:

- Providing a strong voice for the Indigenous people of Central Australia.
- Helping Indigenous people get back country.
- Helping Indigenous people manage their land.
- Consulting with landowners on mining activity, employment, development and other land use proposals.
- Protecting Indigenous culture and sacred sites.
- Assisting with economic projects on Indigenous land.
- Promoting community development and improving service delivery.
- Fighting for legal recognition of Indigenous people’s rights.
- Helping resolve land disputes, native title claims and compensation cases.
- Running the permit system for visitors to Indigenous land.

One member of the Tennant Creek region represents the interests of Tennant Creek and Alekarenge on the Executive.

The Patta Aboriginal Corporation was established in 2007 and administers land on behalf of the Patta Warumungu people. Their ownership was recognised by the Tennant Creek No.2 decision of September 2007. This determination arose from a claim to native title filed by the Patta Warumungu people in July 2006 over the Tennant Creek township. This claim was negotiated between the claimants and the NT government. All parties agreed to recognise the claimants’ native title rights to use and enjoy the land and waters of the determination area.

Patta Aboriginal Corporation is governed by 13 Indigenous Directors and is currently going through a period of substantial reform.

A number of the larger Indigenous service providers in Tennant Creek are also very influential, with Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation (AHAC) and Julalikari Council Aboriginal Corporation (JCAC) being particularly prominent. Both are governed a board of Indigenous Directors and collectively have a substantial impact on health, social service and community development.

**School Governance**

The local schools are guided by NT Department of Education policy and procedures although the local school councils have an influence on overall school governance.

Both Tennant Creek Primary School and Tennant Creek Primary School have school councils. The Alekarenge School is governed by an Executive Committee but does not have a local advisory group.
WCE Community Engagement Process

Establishing a structure

The engagement process commenced with the employment of a WCE Mentor & Engagement Officer and a WCE Community Engagement Leader who worked to establish the project in the region. A number of meetings were held over the first two months to enable Indigenous people to come together and work out what is needed to move forward. WCE staff worked closely with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to facilitate this.

The WCE initiative had an over-arching Indigenous steering committee but the community felt that a local reference group would strengthen the consultation process. After a number of discussions a local reference group was formed. This comprised of key stakeholders from across the region. The reference group then helped identify priorities for the community researcher positions. At the meetings many key potential areas of action were discussed although no-one expressed interest in taking the positions. During this period Valda and Geoffrey Shannon’s names were often suggested as the best people for the role. At the time Valda was employed by Aboriginal Interpreter Service and Geoffrey was working for Julalikari Aboriginal Corporation. In June 2015, circumstances changed for the Geoffrey and Valda and they were able to join the WCE initiative as community based WCE researchers.

Over time the WCE reference group has remained very constant with a small number of replacements as circumstances changed with members. In 2016, the principals of Tennant Creek High School and Tennant Creek Primary School were invited to join the reference group. In contrast to many other governing or advisory groups in the NT, the WCE reference group reflected the actual demographics of the region with approximately 85% Indigenous representation.

The process of community engagement

The early stages of the project were quite difficult as many key stakeholders in Tennant Creek were aligned with particular Indigenous organisations and were viewing the project from personal or organisational standpoints, rather than a broader educational perspective. During this time there was alignment of community residents for, or against, prominent Indigenous organisations. As a result, the atmosphere was uncomfortable for some participants and, at times, it was difficult to get commitment to common goals. Some people gave their honest opinions and spoke clearly, others communicated through the media or third parties. During this difficult period, local Indigenous people provided their views as to what should happen to improve education for Wumpurrarni pikapika (Indigenous children). While they had strong ideas, there was little agreement about how it could be achieved or how to collaborate with one another.

In the first nine months considerable time was spent building relationships between people and organisations. This included working with youth and elders, working with teachers in schools, communicating with people in organisations, also sharing information with Indigenous people from various language groups. The journey was slow and difficult to start with. This was due to the large volume of ideas being generated, vastly different strategies suggested and a lack of trust between organisations as well as individuals.

In May 2015 there was still no local Indigenous staff employed under the WCE initiative in Tennant Creek. Although no-one was directly employed in this time, there was increasing levels of dialogue in the community about Indigenous education and research. People were talking about the need to become involved as Valda Shannon recalls in the quote below.
'... Sometimes it is very difficult, for many reasons, in a place like Tennant, for us to even come around the table and have face-to-face talks. I feel that we have at least had the opportunity to be able to do that and I can recall before WCE, we've never really come around the table, we weren’t taken seriously and for me, I see that our people in the community that are leaders of our organisations and people that are highly regarded in our community, see that Indigenous education is an important area for us to come together, it makes us want to come together, it makes us want to work together and find a way forward together.'

Over the next 12 months people began to put their differences aside to have more productive discussions, although there were occasional flare-ups due to historical associations and allegiances. From time to time, some people actively discouraged participation in WCE events; particularly among the youth. Each time there was an outbreak of tension it was difficult to work through. However, the team worked consistently to rebuild trust and secure relationships.

In 2016 the process became more settled and productive although personal histories still caused tensions from time to time. The period from June 2016 onwards saw the development of a more coordinated approach. A series of follow-up consultations were conducted to test and refine the emerging learnings from the research and implement the elements of the community action plan that were actionable in the time available. This phase also introduced a series of presentations to key stakeholders and continued to develop relationships for possible future change.

**Key Stakeholders**

WCE initiative staff worked with a wide range of stakeholders covering the full spectrum of organisations that fall into three main categories of Indigenous organisations, government departments and community organisations. Discussions were also had with other relevant education providers and with interested individual community members. WCE activities were focused in Tennant Creek, with some travel to Alekerange. activities in Alekerenge were predominantly focused on consultation with school staff.

Social Network Analysis (SNA) was used to map the key stakeholders engaged and understand the relationships between them. The high number of people and organisations involved in Tennant Creek engagement resulted in a very ‘busy’ diagram. After the second round of data had been mapped and at the request of WCE community based staff, the next step in the process was, rather than collecting a third round of data, to break down the diagrams into smaller sectors as follows. The team wanted to assess engagement across the following sectors in early phases of the initiative:

- Indigenous corporations,
- education and research organisations,
- government bodies (local, NT and federal), non-government organisations,
- and community members.

This breakdown showed fairly even engagement across each sector.

The organisations listed below that have acronyms listed next to them are those that were consulted with in the early phases of the initiative, and were included in the first two rounds of SNA data collection (until July 2015). They are visible in the SNA diagram below.


**Indigenous organisations**

- Julalikari Council (JAC)
- Anyinginyi Health (AHA)
- Papulu Aparrkari Language Centre
- Wangkana kari Hostel
- Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS)
- Central Land Council (CLC)
- Northern Land Council (NLC)
- Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service
- Central Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Unit
- Winanjikari Music Centre
- Nyinkka Nyunyu Aboriginal Art & Cultural Centre (NNAACC)
- Patta Aboriginal Corporation (PAAC)

**Government departments**

- Aboriginal Hostels Limited (AHL)
- Department Prime Minister and Cabinet (RSAS)
- Tennant Creek Police
- Barkly Regional Council (BRC)
- Tennant Creek Primary School (TCPS)
- Tennant Creek High School (TCHS)
- Tennant Creek Night Patrol (NP)
- Barkly Regional Education Office
- Alekarenge School
- NT Education Linguist
- Barkly Electoral Office
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
- Department of Business
- Department of Health
- Department of Corrections – Barkly Work Camp
- Department of Education (Darwin)
- Remote Jobs and Communities Program (RJCP)
Community organisation

- Lifestyle Solutions
- Community Members (CM)
- Australian Red Cross
- Catholic Care NT (CC)
- Barkly Region Alcohol And Drugs Advisory Group (BRADAAG)
- Barkly Youth Group
- Barkly Regional Arts
- Tennant Creek Women’s Refuge (TCWR)
- Tennant Creek Youth Advisory Group (TCYAG)
- Indigenous Affairs Network (IAN)

Education providers

- Australian National University
- North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA)
- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Training and Education – Darwin and Tennant Creek visiting staff (displayed in SNA diagram as ‘BI’ and ‘BI-TC’ respectively)
- Charles Darwin University, Tennant Creek Campus (TC-CDU)
- University of NSW (UNSW)

Consultation was also categorised into the following language groups to assist reflecting on the engagement process:

Alyawarr, Warlpiri, Kayetetye, Warlmanpa, Warumungu, Jingili, Mudpurra, Wambaya and Wakaya
2.2 Tennant Creek Engagement from Nov 2014 to July 2015

Abbreviations
- Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal: AHA
- Aboriginal Hostels Limited: AHL
- Aboriginal Interpreter Service: AIS
- Batchelor Institute: BI
- Batchelor Institute – Tennant Creek: BI-TC
- Barkly Region Alcohol & Drug Abuse Advisory Group Inc: BRADAAG

Figure 7: Social Network Analysis map of WCE Engagement in Tennant Creek from Nov. 2014 to Jul. 2015
Partnerships

The WCE teams approached the partnership building process with a number of objectives including:

- seeking to develop a whole of community / whole of government approach to regional education;
- establishing consistent messages for current and potential students. Christenson and Peterson (2006) report that when students get congruent messages from home and school they are more likely to embrace the messages of the learning communication; and
- enabling the community voice to be heard in schools. Historically, designs for infrastructure, curricula development, assessment processes, and school terms / operating hours are created with little local input. As a result Indigenous students do not always feel comfortable and there is little acknowledgement of local culture and knowledge.

In essence the project has sought to act as a development and coordination point for education and training efforts in the region.

A number of partnerships have been created in the region including with the following organisations:

- Department Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Tennant Creek High School
- Tennant Creek Primary School
- Barkly Youth Group
- Julalikari Council
- Barkly Regional Council
- Nyinkka Nyunyu Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre
- Partta Aboriginal Corporation
- Alekarenge School
- Catholic Care NT
- Australian Red Cross

The program has also sought to build partnerships with organisations with whom there has not been a positive working relationship previously.

During the early stages of community consultation in Tennant Creek there was an intention to work in partnership with Wangkana Kari Hostel (Aboriginal Hostels Australia). The intention was to provide cultural and academic support to further education students attending Tennant Creek High School that were staying at Wangkana Kari Hostel. Unfortunately due to change in management and operational foci this potential opportunity did not progress.

The partnership with Nyinkka Nyunyu Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre was established for research purposes. It was agreed by the Tennant Creek reference group that this was an appropriate environment for conducting interviews due to its familiarity to members of the community and its culturally rich environment.
Early engagement activities

A partnership was formed between teachers and WCE staff at Tennant Creek High School and they met on several occasions. One of these sessions involved community based staff talking about local slavery with senior students at the school. The following feedback summarises the impact the sessions have had on the students:

Comments from a Tennant Creek High School teacher:

‘I think that the students got a lot out of the experience. I wanted to share with you some of the key reflections from my students about various Indigenous rights topics we covered during the term. They came a long way over the term and were really able to better place themselves in history and the community. This was effective for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Every time I re-read these I am inspired by the thoughts and opinions of these young people.’

Student reflections:

“By promoting healing in Australia I think it is best to acknowledge the past and let go of the grief that is kept inside and dealing with the healing. To promote reconciliation we need more people talking about the issues that we face as Aboriginals also by coming up with innovative ideas and actions that make a difference and to recognise what has happened in Australia’s history.”

“‘To be able to reconcile between our two races we need to acknowledge and gain an understanding of each other’s point of views about issues such as these. To be able to hear the stories, passed down from people who were there allows us to gain understanding and truly be able to move forward; divided by nothing.’

“It is important to acknowledge the events of the past as we need to pay respects to people of the land and also pay our respects to people who passed away for nothing.”

“The massacres would have affected the Warlpiri and Warumungu populations greatly. The massacres were so traumatic that future generations have not gone back to their country due to be too sorry.”

“As a non-Indigenous person, who has grown up in a small predominantly Indigenous town, who has developed close ties with many Indigenous people and their cultures, I almost feel ashamed to learn about what happened my race had down to their proud cultures. I have now grown up around and developed a great respect and understanding for Indigenous people in this community.”

“As a country Australia must not let the past be repeated. It is up to the current generations of both white and black to keep that culture alive so that future generations can have a better understanding and appreciation of each other’s cultures and families.”

“I realised there are a lot of Aboriginal languages that I never knew existed. These need to be taken care of and not stolen like the past.”

“I feel as though Indigenous people are being unfairly treated, not being looked after, instead controlled, and being bribed almost forced to hand over the land they rightfully re-obtained in the Land Rights battle.”
“The stories I heard make me feel like I was there. They made me feel emotional and made me realise how much pain and stress many Aboriginal people went through in the past. The Indigenous mob felt powerless and could not do much. We have to learn from the past so we do not repeat the same actions in the future.”

“I am hoping next term to begin looking at the topic of Land Rights and any suggestions of people in this community who would be great to maybe have come and speak in class that have a really insightful and passionate perspective would be great.”

Valda and Geoffrey Shannon were involved in an SBS documentary being filmed at Tennant Creek High School about first-year non-Indigenous teacher experiences in remote schools. They were filmed providing cultural advice to new teachers as part of the WCE initiative. The documentary will air on SBS in 2017.

A group of young people from Tennant Creek, students from Yirrkala School and a number of staff members were supported by the WCE initiative to travel to Darwin for one week in September 2015. The aims of this trip were multifaceted. The team hoped to provide them with a learning experience around available study options, accommodation facilities, and support services. Meetings with current higher education students who may not necessarily have completed high school or considered themselves to be ‘academic’ were arranged with the students to demonstrate that further education is not limited to those who have achieved high grades in school. The team also wanted to expose the students to different modes of study to highlight that it is not necessary to move to Darwin to participate in further education, but that this is one amongst many options for participating in higher education.

Positive feedback was received from both students and participating staff about this event. BIITE was a popular choice of where students said they were interested in studying in the future due to the smaller campus, the location away from the busy city area, opportunity to study and not get distracted by shopping, family and entertainment in Darwin, the Indigenous cohort and smaller student numbers. Positive feedback was also received regarding the opportunity to engage with the CDU Indigenous Student Ambassadors. The Indigenous Student Ambassadors shared with the youth what courses they are studying, some of the challenges that they face and how they are able to continue to succeed.

In November 2015, in response to the request of a Tennant Creek youth, a ‘Connecting Youth and Elders’ event was held at the Nyinkka Nyunyu Aboriginal Art and Culture Centre. The event was held to connect youth with elders so that they could talk about resilience within education, opportunities within higher education, how maintaining language and culture can strengthen educational journeys and why higher education both in cultural and western contexts is important. The Elders also highlighted the importance of the sacred knowledge being shared. Partners involved in this event included Red Cross; Catholic Care; Papulu Apparr-Kari Language Centre; Lifestyle Solutions; Julalikari Council; Nyinkka Nyunyu Aboriginal Arts and Culture Centre; Tennant Creek High School; CDU; Barkly Regional Arts; and Tennant Creek Youth Advisory Group. The event was catered for and filmed by local Indigenous organisations. Eleven Elders and seven youth attended the event. The event was organised relatively quickly, and miscommunication led to limited levels of engagement by the youth. The concept of passing on knowledge and support to youth remains a priority for the Elders, however, more time committed to the planning of activities such as this would be ideal.

The Tennant Creek Careers Expo was another activity supported by WCE initiative staff. In August 2016, the WCE team manned the CDU booth along with an Alice Springs Campus CDU staff member at this event. There was good interest in the various courses that CDU offers in both VET and HE streams. CDU and WCE staff ran a question and answer session for students.
Figure 8: WCE and CDU staff at the Tennant Creek Careers Expo in 2016.

Following on from the expo, links have been created between CDU lecturers and the Senior Science Teacher at Tennant Creek High School to expose local students to more science topics.

Activities in Alekerange involved WCE community researchers sharing their educational experiences with students at a family day and at the school.

Research approach

Participatory action research

The WCE project in general was based on a Participatory Action Research (PAR) model, as described by Chevalier and Buckles (2013) and others.

Figure 9: Model of Participatory Action Research (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013).
The PAR process seeks to understand the world by trying to change it, collaboratively and following reflection. PAR emphasises collective inquiry and experimentation grounded in experience and social history.

Using a PAR approach, based on data collection, reflection and action, the project sought to find ways to improve education outcomes and reduce education inequalities through involving the people who, in turn, take actions to improve their own education environment.

Work by Bergold and Thomas (2012) notes that PAR is based on a number of fundamental principles including:

- commitment to democratic process;
- creation of a “safe space” for the research process;
- a clear definition of “community” for the purpose of the research; and
- acceptance that there will be different degrees of participation within the project. These may ebb and flow over time.

**Data collection**

Initially data from the NT Department of Education and BIITE/CDU enrolments were examined to confirm that Tennant Creek Indigenous higher education participation figures reflect national studies including the 2012 Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, which revealed a HE participation rate of less than 1% and completion rates of approximately 28%. From that point data collection became qualitative, focused on collecting community ideas through mechanisms such as:

- Individual interviews
- Focus groups
- Observations

**Reflection**

Reflection on the discussions with stakeholders and observation were critical to this process. Our reflective process was based on the work of Taylor (2000) which suggests three elements of reflective practice:

1. **Technical Reflection** – this seeks to focus on the facts that surround the situation to encourage evidence based practice.

2. **Practical Reflection** – this element analyses the human interactions experienced, or the communication involved, to consider whether reciprocal expectations are defined and understood by the people involved.

3. **Emancipatory Reflection** - this area considers the power dynamics of the interaction, looking at elements like hegemony (domination of one power over another); reification (assigning unjustified authenticity to a concept); false-consciousness (systematic ignorance) and emancipation (the experience of freedom.)
In practice the reflective and iteration process involved a number of elements which included:

- regular Tennant Creek WCE team meetings;
- approximately thrice-annual WCE initiative team meetings;
- discussions with WCE Program Manager and evaluation staff after each field trip;
- field trip reports becoming a reflective journal; and
- re-testing of evolving concepts with stakeholders.

**Action**

The collection of information and subsequent reflection led to a series of actions throughout the project that were captured in a series of action plans and targeted activities. A high level summary of the July 2016 Tennant Creek action plan is included below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Focus Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Language Literacy & Numeracy (LLN) | • Determine the key issues  
• What are organisation/community concerns  
• How can cooperation and collaboration be improved |
| Developing Assistant Teachers (ATs) | • Increasing numbers of ATs  
• Integrating with other staff  
• Impact of ATs in classroom |
| Use of cultural metaphors in learning | • Alternative ways of teaching (pedagogies)  
• Classroom implementation  
• Integration into curriculum |
| Governance                | • Engagement with government departmentsAttendance at school councils and student forums |
| Youth Development         | • Operational planning  
• Funder engagement  
• Remote delivery & support |
| VET Sector Expansion      | • Enhance CDU remote delivery  
• Increase enrolments  
• Embed LLN program & mentoring  
• Trial with health sector |

*Figure 10: July 2016 Tennant Creek WCE Action Plan*
Key achievements

Achievements of this program must be considered in the context of some key issues that impacted on implementation, and in the context of some other broader considerations. Some examples include: the timeframe and broad scope of the initiative; that local Indigenous WCE staff were only employed in the WCE initiative for less than eighteen months; there was a change-over in the campus based WCE staff six months before the completion of the project; and that inter-organisational harmony was a prerequisite for moving things forward and considerable time and effort was spent throughout the initiative in attempts to work towards this.

Keeping factors such as these in mind, achievements fall into several categories. These can be summarised as follows:

1. Raising community awareness of the significance of education generally and particularly the transition to higher education. Some individuals and organisations consulted reported that they had never had the opportunity to talk intensively about education before or been given certain information about education pathways.

2. Building the basis for better collaboration. The region has a history of difficult interpersonal relationships and difficulties between organisations, for which there is no ‘quick fix’. This project carefully included all stakeholders and created an awareness that the educational challenges facing the region are bigger than any individual or organisation and can only be solved by a ‘whole of community/whole of government’ effort. This, of course, takes ongoing effort.

   ‘There was a vast variety of people that probably – if they didn’t pull them together for that they probably wouldn’t sit at the same table. We had to smooth over a couple of issues straight away when we sat at the table, people had personal differences. Hold on – it’s not about that. This is about kids’ education and adult education.’

   - Government employee.

3. Offering insights into effective community engagement. The project has provided new academic material in the field of ‘interculturality’ and working with contrasting perspectives (Moore, Shannon & Scholz, 2016). This offers potential for further exploration and development. It has also reviewed Indigenous community engagement (Cervone, 2007; Campbell & Christie, 2009; Madden et al, 2013) and higher education and community engagement (Campbell & Christie, 2009; Dempsey 2009; Bernardo et al, 2012; Clifford and Pertrescu 2012).

4. Promoting Indigenous culture and governance in the education environment. This has been achieved through a number of mechanisms including the following:

   - Improving Indigenous representation on the school councils – 10% increase at the primary school and 20% increase in the high school. It is extremely positive that Indigenous representation has increased and further growth should be encouraged. In practice due to community commitments, personal circumstances etc. there is often only one or two Indigenous members present which causes them to feel quite isolated and limits effective participation.

   - Adding cultural content into the curriculum by running specific education sessions with classes.

   - Providing information to education staff regarding cultural protocols.

   - Building on educational curriculum and pedagogy by introducing previously undiscovered materials and resources.
- Working on Indigenous workforce development with employers and government agencies.

5. Providing the opportunity for educators and people working in community organisations to engage in reflective practice:

‘I think that for me it has made me think more broadly about the purpose of my teaching and who I am as a non-indigenous Australian and how I can promote reconciliation from within a classroom and within a school setting more broadly. It’s the opportunity to engage in dialogue and explore issues and sort of open up possibilities that weren’t there before.’

- School teacher.

6. Offering an environment to test new approaches to inter-cultural learning with educators. This includes trialling of various cultural metaphors with teaching staff for use in the classroom including the 8-ways approach:

![Diagram of the 8-ways approach](image)

Figure 11: Eight Ways Approach (Yunkaporta, 2009)

7. Identifying key English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) issues and possible mechanisms to address them. This included the exploration of Direct Instruction with school staff.

8. Providing youth mentoring and support. Program staff worked with six young people in a range of ways to assist them to build self-confidence and leadership skills, in addition to supporting their study pathways. This included providing informational, social and emotional, and practical forms of support. Some examples include providing encouragement to pursue study and other life aspirations, information about potential study options and how these relate to local employment options, assistance to complete forms for enrolment, networking support for job application processes, and counselling when they were experiencing personal, study or workplace challenges. Two young people were provided with significant hands on support to successfully apply for and
complete Indigenous Human Rights Training at the University of New South Wales. A quote from one of the youth who graduated from this course is below:

“It will help me to advocate in my community, for the things that are blocking Aboriginal people from getting education. I want to help push them to the next level to make them feel comfortable enough to know their rights.”

- Tennant Creek youth

The Tennant Creek WCE team were also involved in taking local youth on visits to CDU Casuarina and organising events such as the 2016 Remote Youth Leadership Summit.

9. Promoting the need for action on issues of remote Indigenous disadvantage at events such as the Society for the Provision of Education in Rural Australia/International Symposium For Innovation in Rural Education 2016 Conference in Mackay and the 2016 National Indigenous Leaders’ Conference in Darwin.

10. Developing a Local Community Action Plan. This was delayed in development due to relatively late employment of community based WCE staff and a number of other challenges that have been discussed in this report. It is displayed on page 24.

11. Seeking to influence system reform by meetings with key community organisations, NT Members of Parliament and ‘coordinating’ agencies such as the Department of the Chief Minister and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
Key lessons learnt

There have been a number of lessons learned through evaluation of this project in a variety of different areas including the following:

- Timelines
- Project design and planning

Timelines

Perhaps the most critical lesson to be reinforced is that of time frames. Due to a range of factors the Tennant Creek project was slower than expected in the establishment phase and consequently only had full operational capacity for about 16 months. The process of building relationships and establishing trust with community members and organisations in this setting cannot be underestimated, and a significant amount of time and effort was required to do so. Up until the end of the project, work was ongoing to maintain communication with different stakeholders and attempt to achieve harmonious collaboration across organisations.

At the end of the project, in December 2016, there was an overview of ideas for education reform but no time to actually implement change. Extension funding has been sought from a number of agencies but many efforts have not been successful. Two years of implementation funding would enable real progress to be made on significant changes to support remote Indigenous learners.

Project design and planning

There was some lack of clarity about the aims of the WCE initiative, and this had an impact on the initial stages of implementation. Some stakeholder comments:

‘There was a lot of confusion right at the beginning... because it was a new initiative.’

- Indigenous organisation staff member

Further detail regarding this will be explained in the WCE initiative evaluation report, which will be available at: www.remotengagetoedu.com.au

Research by Bergold and Thomas (2012) specifies a number of fundamental principles for success. In retrospect not enough effort was expended in building the crucial foundations for effective results. This is true in the following areas:

- Commitment to democratic process – a clearer sense of purpose and appropriate ‘ground rules’ may have eased the establishment process, reducing the degree of confusion and tension that were apparent at times. This applies to CDU’s internal relationships as well, given there were significant differences of opinion as to the preferred approach.

- Creation of a “safe space” for the research process – the lack of initial clarity and ground rules contributed to a “less safe” research environment that was compounded by existing lateral violence in the community. The Australian Human Right Commission – Social Justice Report 2011 outlines this phenomenon in Chapter 2. It is explained as being “the organised, harmful behaviours that we do to each other collectively as part of an oppressed group: within our families; within our organisations and; within our communities. When we are consistently oppressed we live with great fear and great anger and we often turn on those who are closest to us.” In Tennant Creek (as in
other places) it is true that when asked most Indigenous people will recount stories of back stabbing, bullying and even physical violence perpetrated by community members against each other.

- Acceptance that there will be different degrees of participation within the project. As there has been different methods and degrees of interaction with the community with this project, there is a perception in some quarters that not all people have been engaged, or engaged effectively.

An example of the impact of challenges experienced during project establishment was a degree of miscommunication with Tennant Creek High School staff. However a prompt, and open, response led to improved relationships with the school and closer collaboration for the remainder of the project.

While baseline information was presented to the community initially this may not have been extensive enough. Provision of more comprehensive background data in an accessible form may have increased project credibility and subsequent community buy-in.

**Future directions & recommendations**

The following section detailing future directions are based on what was learnt through implementation of the project in addition to data provided by community members with regards to their higher education aspirations and needs.

What can be done to increase the uptake of further Indigenous students in Tennant Creek and Alekerange (and by extension the broader Barkly Region)? As mentioned in the project background, a simplistic (and very incomplete) answer is for HE and VET providers assist in this process by offering a range of support services including the following:

- Indigenous student services and support programs
- Indigenous access programs
- Indigenous studies and Indigenous designated programs
- Healthcare programs
- Indigenous teacher education programs

The What Works materials developed by Reid et al (2013) include a detailed analysis of transition issues in their Core Issues 12: Improved Transition, Improved Outcomes publication and provide practical guidance including a transition checklist which is reproduced below in Figure 12.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals and strategies</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Transition point</th>
<th>Not evident</th>
<th>Could be improved</th>
<th>Working well</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear goals</td>
<td>A goal that describes measurable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective data collection</td>
<td>Effective data collection process to accurately identify a student’s current levels of social, emotional and cognitive development</td>
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<td>Capacity to use data to plan for transitions</td>
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<td>Processes to gather and use information and feedback about the factors contributing to a student’s readiness</td>
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<tr>
<td>School culture</td>
<td>Agreed positive core beliefs about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students’ capacity to learn and achieve</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Understanding the importance of school–family–community partnerships</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their cultures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whole–school approaches</td>
<td>Agreed and consistently applied approaches to classroom teaching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Make learning content engaging, accessible and culturally responsive, for example, culture inclusion programs</td>
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<td>Early intervention to support literacy and numeracy development</td>
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<td>Processes that include, support and engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</td>
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<td>Whole–school approaches to positive relationships</td>
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<td>School absenteeism and attendance programs</td>
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<td>Use of Personalised Learning Plans, pathways planning and quality career education</td>
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<td>Broad curriculum provision in senior secondary years either at the school or through other arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>School transition programs</td>
<td>Effective leadership and planning</td>
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<td>Agreed evidence-based practice</td>
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<td>Targeted strategies and actions</td>
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<td>Culturally responsive</td>
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<td>Effective communication</td>
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<td>Inclusion of relevant people involved and building their capacity</td>
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<td>Student level strategies</td>
<td>Student case management, mentoring</td>
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<td>Wellbeing support/targeted financial support</td>
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<td>Targeted assistance for skill development among low achievers, eg, tutoring and peer tutoring, homework clubs</td>
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<td>Programs to improve students’ social skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family and community strategies</td>
<td>Shared transition vision to work towards</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Build an atmosphere of working together to achieve the vision</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identify and use community leaders who can support transition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Locally relevant and shared action plan that identifies how all those involved will work towards achieving the vision</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Communication of the key messages and action plan to the broader community</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Programs that encourage parental and family involvement</td>
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Figure 12: What Works Program’s Transition Checklist (Reid, 2013).
Schools and further education (HE/VET) providers could work together to produce a localised transition checklist and associated processes. BIITE and CDU could also work on enhancing their access programs (Preparation for Tertiary Study and Tertiary Enabling Program) for remote area users. Currently these programs appear to be more effective in major campuses and centres; in more remote areas student access becomes more difficult for a number of reasons including access to study areas, availability of affordable bandwidth and direct student support.

Another practical step would be for the partner further education providers (BIITE & CDU) to improve their presence in the region through a variety of measures including:

1. Improved cultural safety including employment of local Indigenous staff;
2. Enhanced community engagement and promotion activities in the region beyond the WCE initiative;
3. Increased numbers of staff based in the region (this has already begun with a CDU VET Business Lecturer being based in Tennant Creek from 2017); and
4. Creation of an accessible study centre on Paterson Street which provides extended access for VET/HE students with internet access. In the interim, negotiating a deal with telco providers to provide affordable internet access to students should be considered.

The above was outlined further in an internal memorandum to CDU Executive.

Another key finding is that the approach to education generally is still very ‘mainstream’ or ‘westernised’ despite the population being predominantly Indigenous. There is huge scope for wide-ranging reform and indeed this is considered necessary. A paper by Aman (2015) in relation to the Indigenous people of Bolivia illustrates that this problem is not confined to Indigenous Australian people. The quote from his paper below illustrates that the ‘westernisation’ of education has devalued the true significance of local culture:

‘On a general basis we have sometimes rejected our culture, we who come from Indigenous cultures (los que provenimos de culturas indígenas). This is because of prejudices, of ignorance; we believe that we’re inferior, we become ashamed of our culture (tenemos vergüenza de nuestra cultura), we become ashamed of our language, ashamed of our mother tongue. They have taught us this (nos han enseñado eso), that the European culture (la cultura europea) is the superior one, that it’s the most developed, supposedly. Education here clearly has an occidental format wherein they teach us to value what is European (a valorar lo europeo) and not what is ours.’

These words very neatly paraphrase the sentiments expressed by many Indigenous people spoken to in the WCE research process including students. Many of the educationalists spoken to in this research also acknowledge the current problem of an inappropriate education paradigm that does not allow connection for many of their students. Many passionate teachers feel powerless and poorly prepared to engage their students or the community more generally.

The WCE team proposes a broad reform process that focuses on the following areas:

1. Strengthening culture and governance;
2. Revising the education approach;
3. Targeted measures to address the language, literacy and numeracy gap;
4. Systems reform; and (critically)
5. Looking at education from a community development context rather than in isolation.
These will be summarised in the following table and then expanded upon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CULTURE &amp; GOVERNANCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of, and respect for, culture needs to be central to the education process. Indigenous governance reform needs to be implemented within education-linked organisations and there needs to be a broad over-arching Indigenous governance body in Tennant Creek to oversee change</td>
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<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approach, content &amp; pedagogy</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Teaching needs to have a cultural base</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Proper orientation of non-Indigenous staff to local processes and protocols</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Development of resources including apps and booklets</td>
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<td>- More appropriate facilities &amp; support for Indigenous learners</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- RELATIONSHIPS – results are driven by relationships based on mutual respect and adaptability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- SOCIO-ECONOMIC BASE – a strong base is foundational to community development</td>
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<tr>
<td>- HOUSING – safe and culturally strong living environment providing rest, nutrition and a learning environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>- ASPIRATIONS – develop a sense of hope and expectations of career success with education as a platform</td>
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<tr>
<td>- PREPARATION – establishing a learning culture in the family environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>- HEALTH SERVICES – full range of services including substance misuse programs</td>
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<td>- YOUTH PROGRAMS – encourage exploration and positive development plus support for individuals in difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CORRECTIONS &amp; JUSTICE SYSTEM – seek to divert youth and young adults towards education, training and employment</td>
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<tr>
<th>SYSTEM REFORM</th>
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<tr>
<td>- COORDINATION – create a unified educational vision for the region and support individual organisations to fulfil their work without duplication or competition</td>
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<td>- Remedial programs required to build competencies to the required levels</td>
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<td>- Look to historical programs as well as new innovations</td>
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Figure 13: Yarni Aparr - Recommendations for Education Reform in the Barkly.
Culture & Governance

There is general acknowledgment of the importance of culture in the region from the majority of stakeholders, and in efforts to increase Indigenous participation in education management. What is not apparent is cultural acknowledgment manifesting in adapted systems and processes to any significant degree. Systems and processes remain very mainstream. Work to increase Indigenous membership on governing committees of educational institutions is positive and the increase in representation is very welcome however it may be less effective in practice as it appears on paper. As previously mentioned the increase in school council membership at the Tennant Creek High School is positive but in the words of a Council Member:

“It is good that there are five Aboriginal members on the council. For most meetings not many turn up – they may be sick, away on business and other things. Mostly there is only one or two of us there. This makes me feel lonely, exposed. It is hard to speak up with all them white fella’s looking at you. No support.”

This reflects a perception of a lack of genuine engagement in practical terms. There is no doubt that the Principal and staff at Tennant Creek High School want to make the system work but it appears to be early days in this journey with much work to be done. Schools are not resourced, or well-prepared, to undertake this type of development work.

The ‘Engaging with Indigenous Australia—exploring the conditions for effective relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities” Issues Paper No 5 (Hunt, 2013) points out that engagement requires a relationship built on trust and integrity. It is a sustained relationship between groups of people working towards shared goals. In the spectrum of engagement, a high level of participation works better than lower levels, such as consultation, where problems are complex. Work to build trust and integrity along with effective participation is necessary.

There is also a need for a strategic level of governance that connects education with the whole community to enable coordination and integration of effort. As will be expanded on later in this section, improved education and employment outcomes are dependent on broader community development processes that provide the precursors and supporting structures for improvement.

A high level of expertise exists amongst Barkly region stakeholders but this collective knowledge is not used in a coordinated or collaborative way. Many organisations approach similar issues from different perspectives and independently of one another. This degree of division of effort is compounded by the degree of lateral violence which is counter-productive.

Possible mechanisms to achieve a strategic level of Indigenous governance that have been suggested include:

• support and development of Patta Aboriginal Corporation to assume this role; or
• creation of a governing group drawn from the boards of the existing Indigenous organisations and supported by an independent executive officer.
Education reform

Discussions with students, parents, teachers and community stakeholders overwhelmingly support the view that the education system is not working for the majority of Indigenous students. A few of the comments from students and teachers summarise this:

‘I don’t enjoy going to school. It doesn’t feel comfortable. No fun. The work is hard to understand and I am not coping. It is better to get suspended than go to school. Even if I finish school there are no jobs anyway.’

‘We push kids to go to school through the ‘yellow-shirts’ program. There is a big philosophical difference between governments and the community on this – government is worried about numbers and the community is concerned about engagement and broader community development.’

‘People come out of the school and training systems unable to read or write very well, or do simple math. They are not job ready. This is a limiting factor for many of our community residents. Catch-up programs are too hard to access and too infrequent.’

No-one that WCE staff spoke to felt that the education system was working optimally for most of the Indigenous students. There is huge opportunity for improvement, which involves reconsidering education approaches, content & pedagogy.

Sessions delivered by WCE staff within the schools during this project highlight the very positive impact a new approach, culturally appropriate content and different methods of delivery can have. As a result, the WCE team recommends the following strategies be pursued based on our stakeholder interactions:

1. Increase the cultural base of the local curriculum and approach to teaching. This can be achieved through a variety of methods including:
   - Developing a regular language program;
   - Introducing local history into the curriculum;
   - Have a regular program of community visitors into the classroom to discuss local culture;
   - Possibly utilise the cultural knowledge of the Remote School Attendance Scheme (RSAS) team more; and
   - Use holistic pedagogical processes (for example the 8-WAYS Framework).

2. Expand the Indigenous workforce and strengthen staff development programs. Indigenous students report that they feel more comfortable when they have the support of local staff. People report that there is a distinction between local Indigenous staff and Indigenous staff from elsewhere. The community values people with local language and cultural connections.

   It is noted that there are a number of Indigenous Assistant Teachers in the Barkly that have been in schools for periods as long as 20 years. This indicates that there is not a strong pathway of development for them to become a degree qualified teacher. A supportive local staff development program needs to be put in place to ensure that Indigenous Assistant Teachers not only become full teachers but are encouraged to develop into Assistant Principals and Principals.

3. Improve orientation of non-Indigenous staff to local processes and protocols. Tennant Creek-based educationalists have reported that they feel inadequately prepared to work with local Indigenous people and are unsure as to how to engage with the community. A comprehensive local induction process would benefit staff and students dramatically.
4. Development of resources including apps and booklets. It is an unfortunate reality that teachers come and go regularly within the region. Developing detailed knowledge within individuals alone often means that information departs with them.

There is a substantial collection of resources either developed, or under development, in the community but these are not widely utilised, or integrated in any way. There is scope to use this base to develop new apps and resources that facilitate cultural engagement within the education sector. The health sector has been more active in this area through agencies such as Aboriginal Resource Development Services and NT General Practice Education.

5. More appropriate facilities & support for Indigenous learning. This includes a number of points mentioned in the transition overview including:

- Improving cultural safety through facility, procedures and processes as well as employment of local Indigenous staff;
- Enhanced community engagement and promotion activities in the region, as education providers are as seen as isolated and disconnected from the community by many Indigenous people; and
- Creation of accessible study areas which provides quiet and safe home environments and IT facilities and internet access.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)

There is a great need for catch-up LLN programs for youth and adults who have inadequate skills to pursue further study. Work in this area has been initiated as a Strategic Priority Project within the broader WCE initiative and feedback from Tennant Creek has been used to inform this. Community based WCE staff have also actively contributed to workshops and forums on this topic.

More information about the WCE initiative LLN Strategic Priority Project is available at: https://remotengagetoedu.com.au/

Community development

The Tennant Creek WCE team proposes that there needs to be informal education, collective action and organisational development across the whole of government and whole of community to impact on:

- **RELATIONSHIPS** – results are driven by relationships based on mutual respect and adaptability. Given the duplication of some services (for example early childhood programs) that exist in the region and the degree of lateral violence that flares up from time to time there is a critical need to build trust and integrity amongst organisations and individuals.

- **COMMUNICATION** – open and honest communication is an essential part of strong relationships. This can be achieved through taking a neutral stance on community issues, in this instance education.

- **SOCIO-ECONOMIC BASE** – creating a strong economic base is foundational to community development. Given the prevailing low socio-economic conditions for many residents (70% in the lowest quartile – see previous sections) the odds are unfavourable for good educational and employment outcomes. Raising average house-hold income is critical to creating a base for change. Associated with this could be a review of employment policies to encourage local employment.
• **HOUSING** – establishing a culturally strong living environment providing rest, nutrition and safe learning conditions. At present factors such as over-crowding, rampant substance misuse and long-term unemployment creates a housing environment that is not a safe or quiet. This is not supportive of educational success.

• **ASPIRATIONS** – support a sense of hope and expectations of career success with education as a platform. Currently many youth report very low expectations of future employment with many expecting to follow the same path of unemployment that they have seen in their immediate, or extended families. Economic development and employment policy are critical to changing this along with a more supportive educational environment.

• **PREPARATION** – establishing a learning culture in the family environment. The Productivity Commission Report on Key Indicators (2016) reports that there is evidence to support the effectiveness of programs such as the Family as First Teachers (FaFT). There is a need for more intensive resourcing in this area along with better integration with complimentary programs.

• **HEALTH SERVICES** – a full range of services including substance misuse programs is needed to support educational outcomes. Community members were particularly concerned with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum (FASD), hearing loss, rates of teenage pregnancy and general substance misuse issues. Of particular concern is the reported high rate of volatile substance misuse including petrol and alcohol. This is consistent with observations of WCE staff during the night time of community activity and was confirmed by discussions with the police.

• **YOUTH PROGRAMS** – encourage exploration and positive development plus support for individuals in difficulty. A combination of factors such as low socio-economic environment, lack of engagement with school, limited recreational activities and substance misuse rates mean that many youth are at high risk. There have been a number of youth programs running historically, but they are dependent on volunteer support. Efforts have been made by a number of organisations to coordinate effort (including Australian Red Cross).

• **CORRECTIONS & JUSTICE SYSTEM** – seek to divert youth and young adults towards education, training and employment.

**Systems reform**

Recommendations for systems reform include:

• **COORDINATION** – create a unified educational vision for the region and support individual organisations to fulfil their work without duplication or competition

• **TIME FRAMES** – introduce time frames of 5-7 years to facilitate an improved chance of success. The current rapid change of policy and programs is destabilising.

• **PROGRAM & PROJECT GUIDELINES** – move away from narrow output focused guidelines to more flexible outcome/impact focused approaches

• **ADMINISTRATION** – reduce often onerous administration burden to allow a more results focused approach

• **MANAGE EXPECTATIONS** – in general the approach should be to promise little and deliver big

• **USE EXEMPLARS** – the most successful programs have been based on-country, intercultural, in language and based on experiential learning (for example, ranger programs).
• **LOCAL RESOURCING** – Provision of a locally based higher education staff member at CDU/BIITE to pursue community engagement and mentoring activities.
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Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme
Yirrkala Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Evaluation Report
Rom-manapanmi ga dhinthun djalkiri bathala dhukarr
Working together and tracking pathways towards higher education

Report prepared by
by Dr Bronwyn Rossingh, Yalmay Yunupingu, Djuwalpi Marika, Barayuwa Mununggurr, Roslyn Wheatley
Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme.

DISCLAIMER
This report was written by the stated authors and does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative of the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership of Charles Darwin University. It provides multiple perspectives and reflections on engagement with a range of stakeholders over time and is not intended to be definitive, comprehensive or imply community consensus with the views expressed.

Warning: Images of deceased persons may appear in this report.

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Acknowledgements

Having Yirrkala community be part of the Whole of Community Engagement Initiative (WCE) added a rich and deeply cultural dimension and at the same time revealed a story about strong people who have fought for rights and recognition over a long period of time and continue to do so today. This strength and culture has been a prominent theme throughout the initiative. The people of Yirrkala have been welcoming, supportive, generous and committed to the initiative and to the WCE staff involved. So many people have been involved in the WCE initiative in Yirrkala but two very special people are Yalmay Yunupingu and Djuwalpi Marika and their families who have given so much of themselves in the name of improving education pathways. Thanks also to the Yambirrpa schools, including all principals, Stuart Bramston, Merrkiyawuy Ganambarr-Stubbs, Leon White and all of the school staff who have supported WCE staff.

Thanks also to Banbapuy Whitehead, Roslyn Wheatley, Barayuwa Mununggurr and Yananymul Mununggurr who have provided ongoing support.

Figure 1: Yirrkala takes pride in its history of bilingual education.

Figure 2: Picture that represents Dhapanbal Yunupingu’s education journey.
“In the picture above I wanted to show people how I see my journey so they can understand through my eyes. It is not just a picture, it is how I became who I am, my identity. The picture is a metaphor about Yolŋu' and Balanda' sharing together, working together and understanding each other.

The Baru (crocodile) is my dreaming, my identity, my singing and dancing. The guya (fish) represents how the guya come into both the saltwater and freshwater and share the water and the different types of plants growing in that area. Like the mangrove and paperbark trees and other plants mixing together – that is how Yolŋu live.

The Yolŋu footprints are travelling to the Western world and getting Western education. The boot prints are the Balanda travelling to the Yolŋu world and getting Yolŋu education. We are sharing our knowledge together and learning to live in a balanced world.

Saltwater is the Western knowledge that I have learnt about and the freshwater is my Gapu (water) from my Gumatj clan and represents Yolŋu knowledge. The freshwater and saltwater represents my growing up when I was at the Yirrkala School and educated in both Western and Yolŋu way. We would go out on country and learn about gapu, dhuwa and yirritja [moieties] and who owns that gapu and who sings to that gapu. We learnt about the seasons and burning of the grass for new growth. In school we would write in our journals in Yolŋu and then in English – that’s how we balanced the knowledge together.”

---

1 'Yolŋu' refers to Indigenous people of the East Arnhem region of the Northern Territory.
2 'Balanda' is used to refer to Western people or knowledge systems.
The WCE Yirrkala Community Team

Yalmay is a Yolŋu Rirratjingu woman from Yirrkala. Yalmay works at the Yirrkala School as a Senior Linguist. Yalmay is the Coordinator of the Yirrkala activities under the WCE initiative and Community Co-researcher and Honorary Fellow of CDU. Yalmay was awarded her education degree in 2015. Yalmay has a long history as an educationalist, and is a strong advocate of the ‘both-ways’ philosophy and is very passionate about Yolŋu people achieving higher levels in education. In 2005 she was awarded ‘Teacher of Excellence (Remote Community)’ by the Northern Territory Department of Education. In 2014 she delivered a powerful keynote speech at the inaugural National Indigenous Human Rights Awards in Sydney. In 2015 Charles Darwin University appointed Yalmay as an Honorary Fellow.

Dr Bronwyn Rossingh is the Community Engagement Leader for WCE in Yirrkala. Her experience working with and for Indigenous organisations and communities in Western Australia and the NT extends over 25 years. She has been working in the education domain for over seven years. Bronwyn is a Fellow of Certified Practising Accountants (CPA) Australia, an editor for the Evaluation Journal of Australasia and a reviewer for AlterNative – An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples. Bronwyn seeks to encourage and support Indigenous people to drive research and other projects in accordance with their own vision and aspirations.

Djuwalpi is a Rirratjingu man and senior community leader of the Yirrkala community. Djuwalpi is a Senior Mentor, a Steering Group Member for the WCE initiative and WCE Community Co-researcher. He is a proud father of four and a grandfather of eight. Djuwalpi works as a Senior Mentor in the Yirrkala School and is the Chairperson of the Yambirrpa Schools Council, which governs the Yirrkala Community School and Homelands schools. He is also Chairperson for the Yirrkala Gurrutu’mirri Mala Reference Group, has been a board member of Miwatj Health for over fifteen years and is the Chairperson for the Yirrkala Community Alcohol Management Committee. He is passionate about motivating, empowering and inspiring people through sharing his experience and knowledge and nurturing confidence.

3 Both-ways philosophy refers to a way of working that respects both Indigenous and Western cultures (Yunupingu, 1991).
Matalena is from Aotearoa New Zealand. She worked with WCE in Yirrkala and Galiwin’ku as the Mentor and Enrichment Officer from December 2014 to December 2015. Matalena has a PhD in human geography from Macquarie University and a Masters of Education from QUT. Her research interests include Indigenous rights, Indigenous development, postcolonial and postdevelopment theory, collaborative and participatory practices, environmental management, and social impacts.

The WCE Yirrkala Community Working Group

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Wjanarr  Māna
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Dhāruk  Dhuwal
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Bāpurru  Ğātiwuy
Mālk  Galiyan’
Mit’tji  Dhuwa
Wjanarr  Māna
Dhāruk  Dhuwal
Mala  Gapiny

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Principal of the Yirrkala Community School

Leon White
Principal of the Yirrkala Homelands Schools
Other community leaders associated with the WCE Yirrkala Community Working Group

Mr W Wunuŋmurra (dec.)  Lirrpiya Munuŋjurra
Witiyana Marika  Muŋurrapin Maymuru
Banambi Wunuŋmurra  Timmy Barawanga

A Special Mention

We gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Mr Wunuŋmurra whose passion and drive was integral to the work of WCE in Yirrkala. Although no longer with us, his vision for Yolŋu education will always be valued and continue to benefit the lives and aspirations of many. He was a strong leader who was one of the signatories to the Bark Petition, former head of the NLC, Chairman of the Laynhapuy Homelands and Yambirrpa Schools Council and a strong advocate for Aboriginal Rights including the right to education for young people. May he rest in peace.

Yambirrpa School Vision set by Mr. Wunuŋmurra, March, 1996

“I honestly believe that our children can achieve anything”

Figure 8: From (L): Yananymul Mununggurr, Dr. Bronwyn Rossingh, Yalmay Yunupingu, Dr. Matalena Tofa and Barayuwa Mununggurr.
Background

The Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative was funded by the Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP) of the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training. It was led by the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership (OPVC-IL) at Charles Darwin University (CDU).

Yirrkala community context

The Yirrkala community is located on the east coast of the Gove peninsula in north-east Arnhem Land, 18 km south of the town of Nhulunbuy. The population is around 843, of which 649 are Yolŋu. People tend to move between Yirrkala and surrounding homelands. Yolŋu Matha is the most widely spoken language in Yirrkala with a number of dialects. The community has been delivering bilingual schooling for over 42 years and this is considered a critical factor in developing young children to read and write in Yolŋu Matha and English to master the English based curriculum in their senior schooling years.

The town of Nhulunbuy is a fifteen minute drive from the community and is currently undergoing a period of significant change due to the impending closure of the Rio Tinto mine. The full impact of this on the Yirrkala Community is uncertain. The education landscape in the East Arnhem area has also seen major changes over the past two years in readiness for a residential school located in the grounds of the Nhulunbuy High School.

Local governance structure

There are 13 clan groups in the community. The Rirratjingu Clan are the traditional owners of Yirrkala. The East Arnhem Regional Council provides local government services in Yirrkala, which is in the Council’s Gumurr Miwatj Ward. This is one of six wards in the Council. The Council’s headquarters are in Nhulunbuy and it has a service delivery centre in Yirrkala which also services Gunyangara. The Council consults community members through the Local Authority of 12 locally elected community members, the Yirrkala Mala Leaders Association.

The WCE team has worked with community leaders who are representatives of:

- East Arnhem Regional Council
- Local Authority – Yirrkala Mala Leaders Association
- Gurrutu’ Mirri Mala
Community education context

The key message that community leaders constantly convey is that young people and adults need to have awareness of and access to education pathways that lead to employment and that Yolŋu need to have the prerequisite qualifications to fill the top level positions of community-based organisations. The WCE Initiative was of high interest to the Yirrkala community in achieving this education and employment vision through the provision of support and active promotion of relevant and attainable education pathways. The Yirrkala community has:

- lobbied hard for land rights over many years – the Bark Petition from 1963 still sits in Parliament house;
- experienced International fame through Yothu Yindi Band;
- developed the both-ways education concept; and
- maintained a strong bilingual and bicultural school curriculum.

Figure 10: Yirrkala Bark Petition (1963).

In 1984 the Yolŋu Action Group was first started in the Yirrkala School which gave voice to Yolŋu staff in the school. This group was a sub-committee of the School Council which is made up of representatives of all Homeland Centres and clan groups in the Laynha area. It was the mechanism used to achieve control of everyday matters and to plan, evaluate, raise important issues and make recommendations for the school (Marika, 1999). As a Deakin University ‘DBATE’ (Deakin-Batchelor Aboriginal Teacher Education program) student, Dr. Yunupingu developed further the notion of ‘both ways’ education. He sought the ideas and advice from many community leaders at that time including Mr D. Mununggurr and Mr W. Wunungmurra. In 2012, the Yirrkala School celebrated 42 years of bilingual schooling.

The Yirrkala community is home to a CDU Office that is located in the main street of the community next door to the Yirrkala Homelands School (YHS). It is a small office that was underutilised until the WCE initiative gained access to it. This office is now a busy education and training hub that the Yirrkala Homeland School is currently caretaking and they are seeking to continue this responsibility into the future.
Metaphors as the foundations for WCE

Garma Metaphor

This bark painting by Yalmay Yunupingu (under the guidance of Dr Yunupingu in 1969) represents the Garma metaphor which is based on many levels of meaning like a network that extends in all directions. It symbolises the kinship relationships that is referred to as ‘Gurruṯu’. This is a Yirritja painting and it belongs to the Gumatj clan representing fire, land, sea and Yolŋu. Where the freshwater meets the sea water, they meet in the middle forming brackish water called ‘Galimiṉḏirrk’. It represents Yolŋu and ḳapak (non Yolŋu) reconciling and finding a real balance that respects Yolŋu domain –‘bala ga lili’ (give and take) in reciprocity.

The Garma metaphor symbolises how the WCE and Yirrkala community are working together and sharing ideas for the benefit of the community and its expectations around education – we build respect and understanding and seek a balance together. This sharing and understanding is fundamental to the CDU and Yambirrpa Schools Council Service Agreement and shapes the process of respectfully working together. This is just like the brackish waters created by the salt and fresh waters coming together to create a new way forward based on a both-ways approach that is a stronger model that always respects and acknowledges the cultural foundations and context of the Yirrkala community and their appreciation of Western knowledges.

Yambirrpa Metaphor

According to Dr Marika (2008) the Yambirrpa (fish trap) is a metaphor for giving, sharing, and building strong relationships in the community and school. The fish trap is secure and sound so no fish can escape, like keeping the kids in the school together. The rocks can be seen as the foundation and the elders sitting there who hold that place together and look after the education interests of the school. This helps the school council and the teachers maintain and deliver strong Yolŋu and ḳapak (non-Yolŋu) education. We want our children to think cognitively and be prepared for the challenges they have to face in the future, to make pathways under the guidance of those elders (Marika, 2008).

Yambirrpa represents a philosophy and process that we have used throughout the WCE initiative. This way we can achieve sustainable foundations that are in line with the community’s education priorities. The building of the Yambirrpa and the teamwork involved ensures that students, teachers, CDU,
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), the Northern Territory (NT) Department of Education and the community are building strong foundations together towards a sustainable learning ground that intertwines Yolŋu and Ŋapaki knowledges. Yambirrpa represents a place that is safe and nurturing with boundaries for students to learn and grow their intellectual knowledge in a two-way learning environment. We work together towards achieving outcomes related to the activities in the Yambirrpa Service Agreement. As per the poster below, developed by WCE staff, the partnership between CDU and Yirrkala community is a shared responsibility arrangement whereby the Yambirrpa Schools Council and the WCE initiative provide opportunities for young people to feel confident to achieve their ambitions and dreams to meet the challenges and succeed in their journey towards higher education.

**Aim of the WCE Initiative in Yirrkala**

Initial consultations with the Yirrkala community commenced mid 2014 prior to the formal engagement process and prior to the recruitment and implementation stage of the WCE Initiative. Two such preliminary meetings had taken place in the community facilitated by the former CDU Pro-Vice Chancellor of Indigenous Leadership – Professor Steven Larkin. In particular, Yalmay Yunupingu had attended these meetings, which were intended to encourage the community to be involved in the initiative and to consider what they wanted to achieve from it.
Actual engagement and consultations commenced in October and November 2014 as described below. The aim of the initiative during the engagement stage was to explore current community perspectives regarding higher education and understand what the community aspirations were. The overarching objective was to identify the community vision and their aspirations for education, understand the barriers and enablers to higher education participation and seek practical ways to improve access. Garnering early thoughts of community leaders through respectful and meaningful engagement and consultations led to a number of ideas and strategies that evolved. A key message that emerged during this time was the vision driven by Dr Yunupingu and supported by the community to have a Bush University. It was thought at the time that a two year project was not able to achieve this outcome directly; nonetheless we could explore together some of the foundations that are needed to support the presence of more higher education opportunities in the community in the hope that this could provide the necessary momentum to achieve this vision.

The WCE initiative was predicated on CDU having presence in communities and learning from community knowledge, culture and language, ways, experiences and attitudes to provide a basis for improving education pathways.

The following section explains the community engagement process in a chronological sequence to convey the finer detail of how relationships were built in the community and how this led to the establishment of a partnership between the community and WCE.

**Community Engagement in Yirrkala**

The Yirrkala WCE team first met Yalmay Yunupingu during a visit to Galiwin’ku where it was established that the Yirrkala community already had a sense of how the Initiative could proceed. Yalmay was inspired and motivated to utilise the WCE Initiative as an opportunity to achieve the community vision of Yolŋu people attaining higher education and also to realise the vision of Dr Yunupingu and continue his legacy to work towards a Bush University. Yalmay became the key contact for the engagement process in Yirrkala and later the part time Coordinator of WCE activities under the Initiative.

Yalmay worked full time in the school so she could only guide consultations during the early stages of the WCE initiative and they would meet each afternoon to discuss daily progress. Part of the community engagement process involved door knocking around the community to speak with community leaders as suggested by Yalmay. It was found that the mere mention of ‘improving education pathways’ sparked the interest of local people with an immediate invitation to sit and talk, often under a shady tree in someone’s front yard.

Yalmay and the team would undertake further consultations in the early evening and talk with more and more community leaders and their families. Each consultation added dimension and strength to the last and provided deeper appreciation for how important education is to the community. Their interest and passion about the future of education in the community and their strong vision for higher education pathways for young people was clear.

These early consultations not only built support for WCE to be involved in the community but established an interest group of community leaders who became members of the WCE Yirrkala Community Local Working Group.

The community engagement process highlighted the fact that WCE’s presence in the community was well received and appreciated. The Yirrkala School became the central focus for the WCE Initiative and this later extended to the Yambirrpa Schools Council including the YHS.
Yalmay’s brother, Djuwalpi Marika had also become part of the WCE team working closely with other WCE staff. At that stage field visits to Yirrkala were not based on predetermined activities, they were guided by the key community leaders including Yalmay and Djuwalpi. It was not unusual for the community to have bungul, memorials and other ceremonial activities (funerals and ‘sorry’ time) happening during field visits and it was expected and became usual practice for the team to attend these occasions or allow the community time to be with family and fulfil their clan group obligations and responsibilities.

It was evident from the way that community leaders collaborated with WCE staff and became involved with the initiative that good relationships had been established and the style of engagement was appreciated and accepted as a way forward. This acceptance allowed a deeper and richer learning journey for the WCE initiative. This would not normally be the case if not for the bonding and relationship building that took place. WCE staff were adopted in Galiwin’ku and this meant they had family connections in Yirrkala (through Gurruṯu). These relationships gave them instant connection to many people and meant that forming new relationships was very fluid and this level of acceptance ultimately provided invitation to attend events and forums normally for Yolŋu only. This was an important part of the community engagement process and provided rites of passage for WCE staff from Darwin to become accepted as family in the Yirrkala Community.

The relationship building that WCE staff experienced also helped to provide access to the community and build relationships for WCE staff and other areas of CDU. This included the CDU staff from the Nhulunbuy Campus, the CDU Office of Indigenous Support Services and other faculties. During each visit community leaders would ask WCE staff what their plans were for the week and once discussed they would then suggest ways that those plans could be achieved and how they could assist. The community context at the time would influence WCE activities and therefore it was important to give community leaders the opportunity to guide and direct how things could be achieved or what may take priority. At times this meant that participation in meetings in the community or other community-based events where the community leaders thought it useful for the WCE team to attend became a priority. Sometimes it meant travelling to homelands or to Nhulunbuy to sit in on meetings to observe and learn about education related matters.

The WCE Initiative and its activities in Yirrkala were based on community engagement using a ground-up, participative and collaborative approach. The WCE initiative intended to give rise to a better understanding and acceptance of Indigenous knowledges and to tease out the barriers and enablers to further education from the community perspective. This level of engagement and knowledge building was achieved through the community providing guidance around the engagement process and thus ensuring that the process was culturally and ethically acceptable and in accordance with community protocols. This gave rise to a heightened sense of learning about the issues so that the deeper meaning of what was being conveyed was heard and understood. This style of engagement formed the basis for the ‘rites of passage’ for WCE staff that evolved as the engagement continued and conformed to the preferred way as per the community leaders.

‘Whole of Community’ Approach

‘Whole of community’ in this report refers to the key organisational representatives, groups, people and families who, over the duration of the WCE initiative, became involved through the engagement process. The key stakeholders engaged in the initiative arose from referrals from community leaders in most cases. Some engagement was based on existing relationships with WCE staff. Essentially, education and employment were the central themes that created the linkages to the relevant organisations, groups and people - particularly Yirrkala School and YHS, for the whole of community engagement approach.
The Social Network Analysis (SNA) diagrams provided on page 17 and also in the appendices of this report identify the organisations and people engaged with.

**Key principles and actions involved in the engagement process**

The engagement process that evolved, as per the above section, was critical to allow an understanding of the community issues concerning education. It was also important for individual WCE staff to ensure that they were not influencing the data and findings. A process of self-reflection for WCE staff was to therefore ask - ‘who are we in this context?’ And, ‘how are our actions impacting the space as researchers, educators, partners, or colleagues?’ Martin (2003) refers to this as ‘locating oneself’ and understanding the assumptions and relations upon which your research is based. Our positioning with the people we are working closely with in the community was based on following the community way and seeking their guidance on how we can better support the community vision. This would help to shape future partnerships and relationships to achieve outcomes aligned to this vision. This is the focus that unfolded under the direction of the community and this process assisted the community voice to be heard and the deeper stories and concepts to be shared. The points below describe the principles and values that were followed and respected.

- Engaging under the guidance of community leaders
- Engaging with the ‘whole of community’
- Building relationships with local leaders and stakeholders
- Finding the right people to talk with - through referrals
- Valuing and respecting Indigenous leaders as ‘knowers’
- Listening to community stories
- Building trust to learn the deeper stories
- Quietly observing
- Learning and understanding about education related issues
- Using a ground-up approach - community perspective
- Appreciating the issues from Yolŋu perspective
- Prioritising the voice of the community
- Learning, acknowledging and respecting local knowledge and skills within the community context
- Sharing stories and ideas together
- Embracing each other’s ways

The above principles and values were critical to the engagement process. Actions that unfolded from the engagement approach are discussed in more detail later in the report and relate to the collaborative development of activities that formed and shaped the service agreement between CDU and the community. The following actions guided and initiated the development of the service agreement and other activities conducted under the WCE initiative:

**Actions Arising**

- Working with the community education vision
- Bringing together Indigenous and Western knowledge systems
- Developing sustainable options to enable community and build capacity
• Trialling and implementing education based activities
• Identifying and considering social issues
• Navigating the university from the community perspective
• Seeking solutions to address emergent issues
• Utilising different tools and techniques appropriate to the community way
• Collaborative and participatory action research positioned for improving education pathways
• Attending community meetings and events
• Identifying enablers and barriers internal to the community and schools and external to the community – e.g. NT Government, CDU, Batchelor Institute
• Community representatives attending Steering Group meetings with other key stakeholders and partners
• Travelling to homelands with community representatives
• Employing local community people as CDU staff
• Engaging Indigenous researchers and mentors
• Establishing local community working groups
• Developing partners through service delivery agreements with CDU
• Collaborative planning, strategising, developing and implementing community driven actions

Initial consultation – Social Network Analysis (SNA) at 30 November 2014

The initial consultations involved engaging with a number of community leaders who each represent numerous community boards, regional boards and advisory councils. Through this process many of these community leaders formed the WCE Yirrkala Working Group. The following diagram illustrates the first visit to Yirrkala, when the initial community engagement and consultations took place, which resulted in the working group being formed. At this time the engagement network included twenty-two people and nine organisations. A second diagram depicting engagements until July 2015 is included as an appendix.
By July 2015, approximately 57 individuals and 28 organisations had been engaged with and 177 consultations including a number of follow-up meetings and/or established relationships formed with regular contact.

**Letter of Support for WCE from Community Leaders of Yirrkala Community**

The following letter of support emerged from the engagement process to evidence community support. Some of the Yirrkala Local Working Group members were away at the time but had already pledged endorsement for Yirrkala Community to be involved in the WCE initiative.

![Figure 17: Banambi Wunungmurra - President of the East Arnhem Council.](image)

![Figure 18: Letter of support for the WCE initiative, signed by key community leaders (signed December 2014).](image)

**Early themes and community vision emerging**

During the initial consultation period discussed above, notes were made regarding the issues, ideas, stories and other information arising. A collection of these themes was then provided to the community to seek confirmation and validation. These themes included:

- More awareness of further and higher education needed
- Urgent need for more Yolŋu teachers – Vocational Education and Training (VET) and degree qualified
- Yolŋu people are not in the top jobs around the community
- More professional development and study support needed for Yolŋu team teachers
- Lack of education support in the community
• Training and education needs to be aligned to jobs available in the community
• Concern that government is not in favour of bilingual schooling
• Secondary schooling to remain in the community
• Secondary schooling not aligned to university eligibility
• Need more VET options in secondary schooling
• Need more presence of CDU, BIITE and other universities in the community
• Not enough strong young leaders coming through
• An Indigenous leadership and governance focus is needed - inclusive of youth
• VET options are limited in the community
• Music and interesting programs are not offered in the school
• School attendance impacted by many cultural and family based factors
• Attendance numbers fluctuate and therefore the school misses out on staffing and other resources
• Concern around non-accredited courses not progressing qualifications
• Training facility needed in the community
• Low levels of literacy and numeracy restricting study and work options
• Many demands on the degree qualified Yolŋu teachers
• Seeking to balance community vision, needs and aspirations
• Education and training pathway opportunities in community
• Mentoring and leadership opportunities
• More support for young people to study
• Young people need to be inspired to study
• Research and evaluation training and development needed
• Community aspires to have partnerships with CDU and other universities
• Need to build stronger relationships with education providers

Ways for WCE to support the community vision

As part of the consultations, community leaders and WCE staff discussed what is needed to address the early themes and issues arising. The following conveys some of the ideas:

• Re-igniting the Bush University concept to move towards the community vision
• Strengthening and sustaining community schooling, training and further education
• Understanding and promoting the strengths of and continuing bilingual education
• Advocating for secondary schooling to remain in the community
• Understanding the barriers for Yolŋu people in attaining management positions in community based-organisations
• Identifying culturally appropriate modes and methods of course delivery
From these initial consultations and the relationship building that took place it was acknowledged that the respectful engagement style using a participative, collaborative and contextual approach provided a solid foundation for WCE. This style of engagement developed a number of specific but critical guiding principles as follows:

- Yolŋu perspective to flow
- Letting go of institutional mindset
- Being objective but always learning
- Being guided by Yolŋu
- Honoring the Yolŋu Voice
- Collaboration and respect
- Talking with and involving the key community people
- Promoting a shared responsibility
- Acknowledging each other’s contribution
- Community people leading and guiding

The following poster was developed to illustrate what the community wanted to happen and what they thought could happen as part of the WCE initiative.

Figure 19: Diagram of ideas for the Yirrkala WCE initiative.
As stated above, this poster was developed to tell the full story of the ideas emerging. This was in the very early stages of WCE and as further engagement and meetings with the community working group took place, priorities and logistics shaped how best to plan, structure and implement the activities to achieve those priorities. This led to the Yambirrpa Schools Council being put forward by the working group as the organisation to be funded and to coordinate the activities in collaboration with WCE. Community leaders preferred for the community to be funded and work collaboratively with WCE rather than WCE employ researchers, mentors, teachers, tutors and other staff to work in the community.

**Some quotes from community leaders during early consultations**

Community leaders indicated that over the course of many years there had been so much work done around education and many programs had ‘come and gone’. The following comments were made by a senior community leader (male) concerning the different types of education programs that had been started in the past; some that he thought had been successful and then were discontinued by government:

‘What projects took place over time – why did it break down – I know dollars come into it but it let the community down... It’s very difficult to re-born it back – it is very hard to do that. We had teachers who were professionals making pathways for education – people were more educated.’

The following comments from the same person above arose from a discussion about how mission schooling was in English only even though the community wanted bilingual education:

‘We are caught in the middle, we don’t know if we go right or left - I wanted to jump into someone else’s footprints; why can’t education be normal for Yolŋu?’

As the discussion above continued the same person commented about how when bilingual education commenced in the school that the focus was on the teachers and not the students.

‘Those Balanda teachers became professors of linguistics from our bilingual system of education but this left our kids with nothing. How would they feel if someone talked to them in a different language and they couldn’t understand– they learn everything from our kids but the kids are not learning from the teachers.’

Further discussion about learning English took place and it was suggested that language should be used in industry and that English could be introduced slowly. This person then stated:

‘We have to carry white man culture on another shoulder; we have to carry both together and this makes it very difficult for us... Side by side with napaki (white man) – always two-way learning, use language for industry; grow language [English] bit by bit.’

Comments from another senior community leader (male) arose from a discussion on higher education pathways. This community leader suggested that it is necessary to have a structure that guides students to higher education. His comments as follows:

‘We must make these things happen and we need to set up this path for our young ones to follow. This structure needs to guide our young ones for the future and give them something now – we must do this now for the future. There is an old saying about Balanda coming to work in Yirrkala – when they leave they never leave their shoes; Balanda need to leave their shoes so Yolŋu can fill them.’
Reflections on Engagement

Visits by the WCE staff were regular, sometimes for one week per month and other times up to three weeks per month. Meetings on the beach late in the afternoon to reflect on the day’s activities and achievements were regular. These informal meetings allowed a quiet place to reflect and think about how things were going, what may need to change or contemplation about other ways or other things to progress. This gave rise to an evaluation style that ebbs and flows with the landscape and aligns with the community way – that is respectful, acknowledging and inclusive of culture and the knowers of culture. There was two-way learning and understanding that finished each day on a positive note and clearer direction for the next day, including:

- Listening to the voices in the community
- Thinking about how we impact the space in which we work
- Collective reflecting after meetings, informal chats or interviews
- Regular discussions and consideration of strengths or otherwise
- Shaping our roles as we learn and build relationships

Figure 20: Yalmay Yunupingu (L) and Dr. Bronwyn Rossingh during a reflection session on the beach.

Figure 21: Reflection process used to check back to Yirrkala vision and WCE objectives.
Key Community Stakeholders

Yambirrpa Schools Council – Including the Yirrkala School and the Yirrkala Homelands School

A service agreement was signed by CDU and the Yambirra Schools Council for the WCE initiative. This agreement was collaboratively developed and took nearly six months to develop. It is important to note that the timing of school holidays had a degree of impact on the engagement process, including development of the service agreement, and also that Cyclone Lam and Cyclone Nathan impacted visits to Yirrkala.

Both the Yirrkala School and the YHS were central to the WCE initiative and the service agreement. The Yirrkala School is the community school in Yirrkala with around 140 enrolments. The school is a bilingual school. The YHS provides education services to nine homelands with class sizes that range from 20 to 60 students. Enrolments are around 235 students with multi-age classes catering for students from early years to senior years. The YHS teaches in English only. Both schools engaged with WCE staff and were welcoming and encouraging of WCE to become involved in, observe, learn and share with the schools.

The partnership between WCE and the schools existed informally prior to the service agreement; however, the service agreement brought more structure. It also meant that some of the ideas raised in the early consultations were able to be trialed. The partnership arising also benefited from the YHS caretaking the CDU Yirrkala Office which created a lot of interest for use as a training and education facility.

Key benefits arising from the service agreement – Yirrkala School:

- Working closely with the school and having office space at the school enriched the relationship with WCE
- School staff accepted and welcomed WCE staff and this supported sharing of information, feedback and guidance
- The school began to seek advice and ideas from WCE staff concerning further education and pathways
- WCE was able to get more involved with the community through the school activities and cultural events
- An appreciation for and understanding of bilingual education was to be gained from being in the school
- An appreciation of culture and metaphors in the wider community was attained from being in the school and working with mentors and community leaders

Key benefits arising from service agreement – Yirrkala Homelands School:

- Supporting the trial of the contextualised Homeland Cert VI Training and Assessment Course (BIITE delivery)
- Research relating to education journeys undertaken as part of the Homeland teacher assessments studying the Advanced Diploma course through BIITE
- Observing workshops involving the homeland teacher training/coursework being delivered by DOE, visiting experts, visiting teachers and other providers
- Meetings with and having presence in homelands and in Yirrkala at the YHS
• Homelands Schools providing a caretaker role for the CDU Yirrkala office which is now a regularly used facility for education and training purposes in the community
• Community access to the CDU Office to provide a sense of ownership so they feel welcome into the facility given that it is in their community and on their country.
• Caretaker role has created high usage of the CDU Yirrkala office and this is inspiring people to undertake training and study in the community rather than going into Nhulunbuy
• Building relationships with Homelands Schools principal, staff and teachers
• Inclusion of WCE staff in school activities
• Building an understanding of how the homeland schools operate and the process of training Yolŋu teachers working in the homelands and the pathways therein

**School providing space for the WCE initiative**

Due to the CDU Yirrkala Office being utilised by the community for education and training, Yirrkala School provided alternative office space for WCE staff to work in the Language Production Centre in the School.

![Figure 22: Yalmay Yunupingu, Bronwyn Rossingh and Dhapanbal Yunupingu in the office space provided by the Yirrkala School in the Language Production Centre. Posters and displays developed through the WCE initiative are in the background.](image-url)
Planning the partnership

Figure 23: Draft outline of the service agreement.

Figure 24: Yalmay Yunupingu with the draft outline of the service agreement.
**Service Agreement**

The service agreement was collaboratively formulated between CDU and the community by WCE Yirrkala team, community leaders, school council representatives, school principals and school staff. Negotiations were also undertaken with the CDU Office of Research and Innovation to change the standard university contract to reflect the nature of an Indigenous community partnership arrangement and contracting with a community based organisation. For example, complicated wording, irrelevant clauses and references were removed. Some language in the contract was changed to everyday language as opposed to technical jargon.

**Signing of the Agreement**

Senior staff from the Office of Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at CDU attended the signing of the service agreement with Yambirra School Council, including the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Professor Steve Larkin. This demonstrated that there was high level support for the project.

![Figure 25: Prof. Steve Larkin, former CDU Pro-Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership, signing the service agreement with Yirrkala community representatives.](image)

**Diagram of WCE Engagement and Partnership in Yirrkala**

The following diagram depicts the two levels of the WCE initiative. Firstly principles of the community engagement process is shown, which laid the foundations for all activities in the Yirrkala community and was pivotal for relationship and partnership building throughout the duration of the WCE initiative and thereafter. Secondly, key elements of the formal service agreement are displayed. Development of this commenced in late 2015 and was signed and implemented in 2016.
CDU Office in Yirrkala

CDU has an office situated in Yirrkala. Previously this office was used by the CDU Office of Indigenous Academic Support. Through WCE in 2015 it was recommended that the YHS caretake the CDU Office in Yirrkala based on the needs and demands of the community for training and education facilities. This has been a successful arrangement that has led to many training activities being run in the community.

The community is seeking approval from CDU to continue caretaking as a permanent arrangement. The space is small but useful due to its close proximity to a number of education and training providers such as YHS, Miwatj Employment and Participation (MEP), Laynhapuy Homelands Association and Yirralka Rangers.

Office usage and activities

Figure 27: Local community schools and organisations using the CDU office for training and education.
The CDU office is located amongst a number of community owned and managed organisations who have been utilising the facility for education and training or have indicated that they would like to use the facility in the future. The facility has been used for activities by a variety of organisations such as:

- YHS - for training Yolŋu homeland teachers and providing a quiet study space for them and also delivery of Certificate IV in Training and Assessment course over two school terms and many other workshops
- Yirrkala Community School - for Yolŋu teachers as a quiet study and professional development space
- CDU - staff and community members involved in WCE have held many meetings here
- MEP - facilitated learner driver training for a number of cohorts in 2016
- Yirralka Rangers - have also asked to utilise the space for training and workshops on a regular basis

**Other Partnerships & Relationships**

**Laynhapuy Aboriginal Corporation:** Through association with community leaders; interested in becoming a partner of CDU to explore ways to have more CDU presence and continue the strengths and explore further the findings of WCE.

**Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE):** Through association with the YHS facilitation of Cert VI TAE course delivered by BIITE and also through building of relationships with BIITE staff on the ground in Yirrkala. BIITE are a partner in the WCE initiative.

**Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation and Bunuwal Investments:** Through association with board members and traditional owners as part of network development and discussions around sponsorship of events such as Yalmay Yunupingu’s graduation.

**Buku Larnggay Mulka:** Supporting events (graduation and celebration day) and connecting through research and developing opportunities through the school.

**MEP:** Association through community leaders and relationship building. WCE staff have held several discussions and meetings with MEP regarding ways to link training and education to employment opportunities. MEP link in with CDU courses through the CDU campus in Nhulunbuy.

**Apple:** The WCE initiative, Yirrkala School and the University of Melbourne represent a cooperative group, together with Apple. The group aims to develop the Yolŋu Matha Language Application. WCE staff also supported Apple to conduct an iBooks workshop which was successful in training a number of staff to be able to produce iBooks.

**Miwatj Health:** Discussions have been held with Miwatj around VET based health courses for people of Yirrkala and potential for delivery as part of secondary schooling. Discussions are also taking place around bush medicine, para professional qualifications and connecting with CDU and Flinders Universities.

**Flinders University:** WCE has held discussions with Flinders University campus in Nhulunbuy to explore opportunities for schools to tour the facility in Nhulunbuy and be inspired to learn about health and medicine.

**East Arnhem Regional Council:** Through association with community leaders who are on the regional council or local council boards; there have been offers made to develop proposals of projects arising from WCE to meetings of the regional council.
### Key WCE Activities under the service agreement with Yambirrpa School Council

The below table summarises activities that were listed in the service agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Key Performance Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Under the management of the Yirrkala School to provide leadership and supervision of WCE project activities to produce project outcomes in Yirrkala in collaboration with the CDU WCE team | a. Supervision of project activities conducted  
b. Advice and guidance provided  
c. Yirrkala Working Group and meetings arranged  
d. Ongoing supervision and monthly reporting performed |
| Goḻu bäki marŋgikunhami                                                     |                                                                                           |
| 2. Workforce development for Yolŋu teachers and familiarising student teachers with the CDU and BIITE learning environments | e. Workforce development for continuing Yolŋu team teachers to continue training and to familiarise with the CDU and BIITE learning environments  
f. Employ, enrol and commence training and development for 8 Yolŋu team teachers |
| Marnŋguma - Guŋjayunami Yolŋuwu Team ditijawu                               |                                                                                           |
| 3. Research of Yirrkala and homelands education history and individual stories and experiences to build a local and contextual evidence base to inform policy and practice relating to pathways to higher education including embedding research activities as part of the assessment for coursework in the Advanced Diploma | g. Data collected and reports formulated in conjunction with CDU WCE staff  
h. Data collected and reports formulated in conjunction with CDU WCE staff  
i. Research activities embedded as part of assessment for Advanced Diploma |
| Mawaya Rom – Mangithinyaruŋu ñarruma Dhawu’wu                              |                                                                                           |
| 4. Mentorship and pathway development activities to motivate and support students towards study and community leadership, including school trip to visit CDU and BIITE | j. Role models and mentors working in the schools and four pathway activities developed and implemented  
k. CDU and BIITE visit completed |
| Djikami - Gungayunami dhukarr djämamiyamana - djämanmguma                   |                                                                                           |
| 5. Yolŋu Matha Language Application, iBooks production support, school history video production and other educational tools | l. First stages of application progress achieved  
m. iBooks, video and tools produced  
n. Online learning options explored |
| Marnŋgithi Yuṯawu girri’wu                                                 |                                                                                           |
| 6. Sharing ideas and building sustainable foundations to carry on the strengths of the WCE initiative in the community | o. Development of strategies and submissions in collaboration with CDU |
| Bala – ili Guŋga’yunmi                                                     |                                                                                           |
| 7. Development of a culturally appropriate Cert IV TAE                      | p. Culturally customised Cert IV TAE completed  
q. First training session for up to 10 participants conducted |
| Yolŋu rom ga Dapaki rom Rrambanjiguma                                     |                                                                                           |
| 8. School celebration of higher education day to showcase community-based higher education graduates as well as the achievements of WCE outcomes by the two schools | r. Collaborative activity by the Yirrkala Homelands and Yirrkala School and CDU/WCE team to arrange and conduct celebration activities |
| Marr-Djuɲɲithinyami bala-galili                                           |                                                                                           |
| 9. School Councils gathering - support for the Whole of Community Engagement Initiative to bring 6 other school councils (2 from Tennant Creek, Yuendumu, Maningrida, Shepherdson College, Gunbalanya) to meet at Yirrkala | s. Facilitation, venue and support provided |
| Manapanamirri bukmak Yolŋu-Yulŋu                                          |                                                                                           |

Figure 28: Table demonstrating activities listed in the service agreement.
1. **Supervision of WCE project activities in Yirrkala**

The Yirrkala School agreed to release Mrs Yalmay Yunupingu, a degree qualified Yolŋu teacher and Senior Linguist, to coordinate the WCE activities in Yirrkala for two days a week. This was supported by the NT Department of Education and was consistent with the WCE specific signed Memorandum of Understanding between CDU and NT DoE. A part time senior linguist was employed, using the funds under the partnership agreement, to backfill these two days per week. This meant that Yalmay could oversee the activities and share information between the school and the university and communicate with the working group members and Yirrkala WCE staff.

![Figure 29: Yalmay Yunupingu working with colleagues.](image)

2. **Workforce development for Yolŋu teachers**

The service agreement enabled Banbapuy Whitehead, a degree qualified Yolŋu teacher to support the Yolŋu team teachers in their study as well as observe them in the classroom and provide mentoring to build practical and technical skills in line with the bilingual program. The funds from the service agreement allowed Banbapuy to dedicate one day per week to professional and academic support for eight team teachers working in the school and two staff members from the Families as First Teachers (FAFT) program as well.

![Figure 30: Yolŋu teachers during professional development activities.](image)
Having a Yolŋu teacher work with the Yolŋu team teachers is a powerful model that strengthens each mentoring and tutoring session. This supports and adds value to the tutoring sessions conducted by BIITE. The Yolŋu teacher also observes the team teachers in the classroom and critiques them so she can then provide them with feedback and skill development.

The following comments came from discussion with the team teachers during a tutoring session:

Yolŋu Team Teacher No. 1

‘It is good to have Banbapuy work with our group because she translates for us and we learn from her as well. She helps us with translating and transcribing in Yolŋu Matha - it is helpful.’

Yolŋu Team Teacher No. 2

‘I like her [Banbapuy] being with us because she can interpret for us and she is a Yolŋu teacher and she helps us a lot.’

Yolŋu Team Teacher No. 3

‘It is good to have Robyn helping us and …. [points to a team teacher sitting next to her] helps me as well. Banbapuy is good at helping us, she asks us questions that makes easy to understand. She works well with the Yolŋu teachers. The best way is when Yolŋu ga [and] Balanda teach together.’

Yolŋu Team Teacher No. 4

‘It is good to have both so our study is made easier with Yolŋu and Balanda teachers together – Banbapuy and Robyn.’

Yolŋu Team Teacher No. 5

‘I teach the year 2-3 class as Assistant Teacher – it is the first year I am a teacher and doing this training. I like to work with the other teachers who are here to study for this course. Sometimes I feel shy and find it hard with Napaki teachers. When Banbapuy is here with us she explains what we are doing and things are easier with her. It makes me understand how we can work with the students in the class and makes me confident.’

During visits the WCE staff would join in with these sessions and observe the value of having this dedicated position.

Having Banbapuy dedicated each Tuesday to support and mentor the Yolŋu teachers represents a strong model for Yolŋu Team teachers – Yolŋu to Yolŋu. There is an urgent need for Yolŋu degree qualified teachers in the school to maintain and promote the bilingual program inclusive of the workforce and professional development.

Health and Wellbeing

The schools have been developing ways to embed health and wellbeing into the curriculum. In general students contend with many emotional issues relating to their families, community and other impacts of alcohol, drugs and petrol sniffing. Teachers are being trained and developed to recognise the signs and learn how to best work and support the students.

As part of the WCE activities, five Yolŋu Homelands School teachers currently studying the Advanced Diploma course through BIITE undertook a research project on wellbeing as part of their studies. This assessment was framed as part of the NT DoE’s and schools commitment to lead policy change. The
wellbeing projects were premised on the revitalisation of wellbeing programs across both schools in Yirrkala. A visiting consultant, as part of her Masters in Research with the University of Melbourne, worked with the Advanced Diploma teachers and other team teachers from both schools to develop a wellbeing program that is premised on meaningful metaphors and relevant cultural concepts. The Advanced Diploma students and other team teachers conducted wellbeing activities in the classroom to gauge how students were feeling and encouraging them to share their stories.

**Young Paddlers**

Under the service agreement, funding was provided for the employment of Yolŋu people who are interested in teaching. There have been two young paddlers employed at the YHS and three young paddlers at the YS. These young paddlers are important for the realisation of the vision of the Njalaŋpa mirri (Yolŋu Elders) who set this vision in the 1970s and 1980s with the Community Vision Statement and the formation of the Yolŋu Action Group and the Yambirrpa Schools Council.

![Figure 31: YHS Young Paddlers - Gayalŋa Mununggur and Ashanti Njuriyalawuy.](image1)

![Figure 32: Yirrkala School Young Paddlers - from (L): Shannon Small, Bamurungu Mununggurr and Rhonda Yunupingu.](image2)
3. Research of Yirrkala and homelands education history and individual stories and experiences – by the Homelands Teachers studying the Advanced Diploma through BIITE

The following extracts were taken from some of the presentations by the five homeland teachers working with the YHS studying towards their Advanced Diploma qualification. The stories are about their educational journey. These research projects were arranged to collect information for the WCE initiative to build knowledge about the educational journeys of homeland teachers and understand the enablers and barriers for homeland teachers.

**Story One**

_In the school I teach both languages, both ways because I want the kids to learn, understand and have the skills and knowledge of both ways learning………..I learn through my culture… through songs, bunul, dance, through painting, so that is why they chose me to work in the school, because I know these kids well, who they are, where they come from, and how I will teach them in my language. So I spent my childhood in Yirrkala at the Yirrkala School, primary and secondary until 1992. We moved out to Gathalala and I was taught by Yolŋu teachers and visiting teachers, I was taught by them every day. I came back to Yirrkala and continued to go to school here (in Yirrkala) and finished my year ten. And when I started working with Muthara (senior Yolŋu teacher at that time), I was like, I don’t know how to do, or teach the kids in the classroom. You can see in that photo (in the video of her presentation) I am just sitting away from her, like I am just observing, looking and learning from how to teach the kids. It is very important to learn it, like the kids are learning to speak English, it is very good…… as a teacher… my dreams are for my children to stay in the community and learn this, get the knowledge, stay in the community for their future._

**Story Two**

_….it has been a long journey for me, I first started teaching in this house here (in the picture), in the preschool as a preschool teacher, in 2000. Teaching in that shed, then in 2004 I moved over to another tin shed and I worked there and taught early childhood there right up to secondary and that house as you can see has no light, no bed, no anything - but I was teaching_
there until 2011. In 2011 I moved over to a new building and we moved everything over from the old school to the new school. I was a teacher in the new school, all the students from preschool to secondary and when they come to school every morning they do their ABC every morning. We ask the kids to clean their face and clean their teeth. We get all the students in the classroom to play reading games, reading all the books and things like that, and singing ABC and reading the birds in the dictionary on the wall. Every morning when the kids come into school we read books and we explain to the kids how we read the books and introduce the author of these books and the illustrator of the book....from the walking talking texts the kids learn the meaning of the word in Yolŋu and in English. When I first studied my diploma, I wrote all these things and typed it up into a letter [portfolio], putting all my work into the computer and doing my research and also in that course I have been doing......with other homelands. My sister - when she was working in the school as a Cultural Advisor she was helping me to be an educator for the high school. She gave confidence and always encouraged me. Since I first started, we were just a small school. We are now doing our workshop...we are learning to teach with the visiting teacher and we learn our gurruṯu. I received my Certificate III and IV and then I did my diploma studies and now I am doing the advanced diploma course. First of all I moved to Alice Springs to do that course. Now [in my homeland] I work with the visiting teacher and he is a good teacher and he helps me and encourages me how to be teaching in the classroom and we always work together.

These education journey stories depict the richness of the experience of children growing up in the homelands. The homeland teachers are examples of community leaders who are committed to their communities and the education of their children. WCE staff have attended numerous learning and development workshops where homeland teachers are developed by trainers in their communities, in Yirrkala and other communities and tutored in relation to their studies. Many workshops have been run by Yolŋu or by education experts in areas such as wellbeing, maths, bilingual, rpirri, English as a Second Language (ESL). The YHS has invested in the learning cycle of the homeland teachers and this is demonstrated by the number of advanced diploma and other homeland teachers studying through BIITE and the number of professional development sessions delivered. The homeland teachers are actively involved in these workshops.

Refer to the ‘Education Stories’ section for further information about this activity.
4. **Mentorship and pathway development activities to motivate and support students**

![Figure 35: (L) Djuwalpi Marika during mentoring activities and (R) a mentoring session in action.](image)

Djuwalpi Marika and Mutjangga Munungurr have been mentoring students in the school. They are both senior men in Yirrkala and are strong role models for all people in the community and in particular those families and students associated with the school. The service agreement has provided the funds to enable this mentoring. People around the school have been providing positive feedback to WCE staff about having these senior men involved in the school and the settling influence this has created.

**Music and Song Writing Workshop**

This workshop was conducted from 9-14th December 2016 at CDU. The participants included some senior students who have become disengaged from the Yirrkala School. Two young emerging artists and another member of the community participated in the workshop also. The workshop was facilitated by the CDU music lecturer and two well known musicians (one of whom is also a VET lecturer).

5. **Development of resources**

**Yolŋu Matha Language Application, iBooks production support, school history video production and other educational tools**

The Yolŋu Matha app is currently under development. The Yirrkala School and the University of Melbourne commenced discussions around developing the app in 2015. The purpose of the app was to provide another dimension of learning to read and write in Yolŋu Matha in addition to classroom activities. Given the interest that students have with iPads and iPhones, Yalmay Yunupingu developed the idea of an app which was written specifically for Yolŋu. It was decided that there was an opportunity for the app to become an activity under the service agreement and that WCE would support its development.

During the 2016 Garma Festival a number of people from Apple and Telstra became interested in the app and met with the WCE team and school staff to discuss a way to work together to progress the app. Apple have since pursued this with the Yirrkala School and WCE staff with meetings taking place to further progress the app and seek a developer to commence building a prototype. This cooperative force behind the app has created an increased interest and attracted further attention which has also created benefits for the training and production of iBooks in the school, thus strengthening the relationship with Apple and the school and having CDU (through WCE) as one of the cooperative parties.
These discussions were ongoing at the end of 2016 when staff contracts expired.

**iBooks production support**

![Figure 36: (L) iBooks training workshop and (R) some of the original books produced at the Yirrkala School Language Production Centre that are now iBooks.](image)

An iBooks training workshop took place in October 2016 with around twelve participants mostly from the Yirrkala School, but also from other schools in Nhulunbuy. The Yirrkala School produced three iBooks as per the picture above. These were books previously produced in print by the Language Production Centre in the Yirrkala School but are now available as iBooks. Six people from Yirrkala School have been trained and are actively engaged in their production. This offers students and teachers an electronically available resource at school or at home from their hand held devices. The cooperative relationship between Yirrkala School, the WCE initiative and Apple generated a renewed interest to produce the iBooks and conduct the workshop. The creation of these iBooks, that were written in Yolŋu Matha by Yolŋu people, will be available online. It is hoped that the online written Yolŋu words and audio will bring another dimension to students’ learning.

A school staff member said:

‘Thanks to the WCE project we now have three literacy production workers with the skills to produce the iBooks.’

**School Video**

The purpose of the school video was to have a story and record of:

- History of bilingual schooling in the Yirrkala region
- Stories of culture in the community
- Learning on Country - Yambirrpa (fish trap)
- Current school programs and activities
- WCE activities

The video was filmed during November 2016 by Sarah Hope and Peta Khan who are independent film makers and known by the school.

One of the cultural elements of the video was the Yambirrpa (fish trap) filming that took place on 18th November 2016, during low tide, at the Yambirrpa site. Many young people and families attended from the Yirrkala Community. Djuwalpi Marika told stories about the Yambirrpa and explained the deeper
foundations of the metaphor. The occasion was made even more special with a Yambirrpa crying manikay (ceremony song) by Eunice Marika. This was a very moving moment with Djuwalpi also singing. The film makers also used a drone camera that hovered in the sky capturing aerial footage of the group. Later damper and tea was prepared on the campfire and everyone joined in.

A trailer of the video was launched in December 2016 with the full version to be available in early 2017. The trailer version received over 10,000 views on its first day of release.

Online learning and tools

Resulting from WCE engagement, Buku Larnggay Mulka are working closely with the Language Production Centre in the Yirrkala School to assist with the development of a community newsletter and digitisation of old video recordings held by the Yirrkala School. This will enable cataloguing and restoration of an electronic record of old videos and footage from many years ago including:

- community and school history
- cultural and ceremonial activities
- graduation ceremonies
- Yolŋu school leaders educational stories
- philosophy of bilingual education in Yirrkala school
- lectures by community leaders and other experts

6. Sharing ideas and building sustainable foundations to carry on the strengths of the WCE initiative in the community

There has been much discussion regarding how the community would like to work with CDU in the future and what that could look like. People in the community feel that the WCE initiative has provided them with a feel for what a relationship between CDU and the community can achieve if CDU engages more regularly and more intimately with the community. They don’t see that this should be under a one-off funded project but ongoing engagement and promotion for CDU and are keen to see this happen. People are interested in seeking funding to continue some of the more specific activities that have been implemented under the service agreement that have resulted in strengthening some of the targeted areas that support the vision of the community. The community leaders feel that to achieve this that local people must drive and lead these activities and be funded to do so with the support of CDU through a partnership arrangement. The community advocate for and support the concept of self-management to maintain their values and principles and allow them to develop and grow from any future partnership arrangements.

7. Development (and trial) of a culturally appropriate Certificate IV Training and Assessment (TAE)

YHS is committed to providing relevant on-site professional learning to all staff. Before development of the Cert IV TAE commenced all teaching staff completed an activity together to gauge how the course could best be conducted. The intention of the activity was for teachers to be able to identify steps to success in engaging in and completing BIITE studies. This activity resulted in active feedback from all staff and provided ideas for planning for VET studies and team teaching.

As part of the Yambirrpa Schools Workforce Development outcomes it is considered that a cohort of Certificate IV TAE participants will be more qualified to contribute to the vision, goals and aims of the
school. For example one of the goals is to grow quality leaders, quality educators and opportunities for quality learning. YHS is committed to fostering a strong and collaborative learning culture for their people and schools. Furthermore the school invests in growing an expert teaching team by supporting negotiations between Yambirrp School and BiTE and other registered training organisations (RTOs) to develop appropriate training packages for staff needing to update their qualifications.

Two units from the Certificate III in Education Support are incorporated into the content of the TAE program to support a valid vocational outcome and practical assessments in relation to the development of numeracy, literacy and oral language skills:

![Figure 37: Fish bone exercise as part of a reflection activity.](image)

All YHS teachers completed a planning document and the fish bone exercise pictured above, to reflect on their own way of learning and the strengths and weaknesses of the learning program. Teachers wrote their strengths, weaknesses and preferences for learning models in the fish bones, head and other shapes around the fish. This helped to structure the Certificate IV TAE content.

![Figure 38: Working on the Cert IV TAE.](image)

That the participants were colleagues from the Homelands School or the Yirrkala School appeared to be positive as they could share ideas and have discussion about which everyday activities are important for the homeland schools. The ideas and activities shared in this course have already been used in workshops run with the homeland teachers. The contextual aspects of the training are based on exercises and activities that each participant had discussed with their colleagues who were also participants of the course. Some of the shared activities were: water collecting activities, maths workbooks, visitor information
and mapping, scavenger hunt based on plotting and mapping, and maths with music. All activities had a learning on country or cultural foundation. The customisation was actually through the participants contributions. The BIITE trainer delivered the generic course content but she allowed each participant’s knowledge to come through. She was flexible and adaptable and not overly structured. This allowed the group to complete the formal work using their own activities and ideas.

8. **WCE Celebration of higher education day with Yirrkala School and Homelands School**

This occasion was a combined celebration with the end of year Yirrkala School celebration and the achievements of the WCE initiative after two years of engagement and partnership between CDU and Yirrkala Community. It was held on the 14th December 2016 at the Buku Larrnggay Mulka Arts Centre. The celebration was a way to share appreciation from community to university and university to community and to show case the achievements of WCE and acknowledge all of the people involved in WCE in Yirrkala. Some community leaders and degree qualified roles shared their educational experiences at the event.

9. **Remote Indigenous School Councils Gathering**

The schools council gathering was held at the Yirrkala School in May 2016. This gathering included school council representatives from those schools involved in the WCE initiative. A number of community leaders that represent school councils in each community attended and the gathering allowed for their stories, issues and ideas to be shared. Discussion relating to the need for more attention from government and communities to get behind and support school councils arose as a key theme as did the importance of bilingual and bicultural schooling. The general consensus was that there is great benefit in having the school councils come together to have an open discussion so they may learn from one another.

A Collective School Council Statement on Remote Indigenous Education arose from this gathering and key focus areas that were put forward included:

- A genuine commitment to listen to, and engage with, Indigenous people from remote and very remote communities across the NT
- More funding and support for remote school councils to strengthen Indigenous education governance and leadership capacity
- More Indigenous teachers and team teachers in remote and very remote settings with adequate supports to thrive, grow and lead
• A deeper effort to incorporate local languages, local culture and cultural education practices into school curriculum and activities with the support of local Elders and leaders
• A deeper commitment to expand and strengthen bilingual and multilingual education policies and programs across the NT
• Greater support for non-bilingual schools to incorporate local culture and language into curricula
• Increased support for non-Indigenous teachers to be culturally aware and competent, including the need to demonstrate heart and passion through their work
• A commitment to teamwork and collaboration based on trust and respect
• Opportunities to build school and community leadership potential through mentoring and coaching, particularly among remote Indigenous youth
• Ongoing support for families to support their young ones
• Opportunities to receive a quality education by learning on country
• Move towards constitutional and legislative change which recognises the right of Indigenous people to govern and self-determine education in their own communities
• System change within governments and educational institutions that is sufficiently flexible to reduce barriers and increase support for the above focus areas through meaningful engagement at the grass roots

The statement is available here:


10. Other Activities

Student Pathways Visit

A group of senior students from Yirrkala School, several school staff members, along with young people from Tennant Creek, spent one week in Darwin in September 2015. The aims of this trip were multifaceted. The team hoped to provide them with a learning experience around available study options, accommodation facilities, and support services. Meetings with current higher education students who may not necessarily have completed high school or considered themselves to be ‘academic’ were arranged with the pathways students to demonstrate that further education is not limited to those who have achieved high grades in school. The team also wanted to expose the students to different modes of study to highlight that it is not necessary to move to Darwin to participate in further education, but that this is one amongst many options for participating in higher education.

Positive feedback was received from both students and participating staff about this event. BIITE was a popular choice of where students said they were interested in studying in the future due to the smaller campus, the location away from the busy city area, opportunity to study and not get distracted by shopping, family and entertainment in Darwin, the Indigenous cohort and the smaller student numbers. Positive feedback was also received regarding the opportunity to engage with the CDU Indigenous Student Ambassadors. The Indigenous Student Ambassadors shared with the youth what courses they are studying, some of the challenges that they face and how they are able to overcome these and succeed.
To revisit what was learnt, Yirrkala students developed a classroom display and delivered a presentation to their parents and families about this trip. A school teacher at Yirrkala reported to WCE staff that the students mentioned the trip in their schoolwork that term, for example, one year 12 student who has always wanted to be a ranger reflected that she now knew there were lots of different study options she could choose from.

It was proposed that a similar trip be conducted in 2016. Due to the busy assessment load for the year 12 students who are completing their NTCET, it was decided to conduct a music and song writing workshop, as described below.

**Conferences**

**2015**

Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative and Yirrkala school staff presented at two conferences in September. The first was the Australiasian Evaluation Society Conference in Melbourne and the second was the Population Health Congress in Hobart. The presentations were about community engagement approaches for evaluators and researchers, and the importance of culture and wellbeing to achieve in education, respectively. During the conference trip, a visit was made to Deakin University to learn about the Institute of Koori Education.
The WCE Senior Mentor was involved in four presentations at the National Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme (HEPPP) Forum in Darwin in 2015. This forum was facilitated by the Office of Pro-Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at CDU and took place in October. He spoke about community engagement, student experiences, and about the Yambirrpa (fish trap) metaphor. He was also involved in a number of presentations with other WCE researchers.

![Figure 42: Yalmay Yunupingu (L) and Dr. Bronwyn Rossingh (R) presenting at the 2015 AES Conference in Perth.](image)

2016

Staff involved in the WCE initiative attended and presented at the Australasian Evaluation Society Conference in Perth in September 2016. Their presentation was titled ‘Tracking Pathways Together: Evaluating the Impact of Community Engagement’. Their presentation was about the WCE journey together and how they reflect and refine on the activities along the way.

WCE staff spoke at a number of presentations during the Indigenous Leaders’ Conference held at CDU in Darwin in November 2016. They discussed metaphors and how they are used in the community and the school as rich and legitimate learning tools. They also presented on school leadership and governance.

Garma Festival

The WCE Yirrkala team has attended two Garma Festivals in conjunction with the Yirrkala Community and the Yirrkala School. In 2015 the two WCE campus-based staff working in Yirrkala were invited by the school to be part of the open day at the school and attend the Garma Festival. In 2016 WCE staff were involved in an exhibition stall. A popular activity provided by WCE as part of the stall was to encourage young people to draw their dreams on calico.
Also, as part of the exhibition stall, the Yambirrpa (fish trap) and Miyapunu (turtle) posters were showcased. These posters were developed collaboratively by the WCE community and campus based staff and depict the way that the community and WCE staff worked together and the way that higher education journeys can be successful through a step by step pathway.
Education Stories

A number of education journey stories were shared throughout the WCE initiative for different purposes. Some of the key emerging themes are outlined below.

Contrasting outcomes for those people educated in the community school system compared to those educated externally; including boarding schools

Many current community leaders had sent some of their children to boarding school, however they had mixed opinions about this. Some thought that their children had come back to the community and done nothing with their education, and other children did not come back at all. The community leaders believe that they received a good education in the community or at Dhupuma College (boarding college in Gukula, located around 30 minutes’ drive away from Yirrkala, during 1972 to 1979). They believe that their education provided them with skills to work at senior levels in organisations and take on community leadership roles. They were concerned that the top positions in the community organisations still have non-Indigenous people working in them. They would like to see higher education as a pathway progression from the Yirrkala School and find it hard to understand why students who attain a Year 12 NT Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) in the community are not eligible for university degree courses. They also want to know why Kormilda College Year 12 graduates from Yirrkala are not eligible to undertake a degree level course at CDU.

A community member and counsellor of the East Arnhem Regional Council told of his education story including his attendance at the Yirrkala community school, Dhupuma College and Kormilda College. He later received training and education in Brisbane. He asks:

What is wrong with education, that was a good pathway once – what happened?

A number of parents stated that they did not want to send their daughters or granddaughters to Kormilda College as they were concerned about the number of young women falling pregnant whilst boarding at the college or thinking about boys rather than study.

When the authors of this report reflected on collective conversations with community leaders they considered that the majority had expressed, in the general sense, the view that they prefer their children stay in the community for their education, and had indicated high levels of support for the Yirrkala School bilingual program as well as homeland schooling. They had also expressed a desire for access to educational opportunities outside of the community for their children, reflecting their view that boarding school education is superior to community-based education options.

Anecdotal evidence also indicated that those community leaders involved in discussions and interviews who had themselves been educated within, or close to the community, for the most part considered that they had been afforded a good education. They considered that this had led to senior jobs and roles within the community. It is to be noted that of the senior qualified Yolŋu teachers in the Yirrkala School, two had attended Dhupuma College near Yirrkala, and the other was educated in the community.

Seeking intergenerational impacts of having successful parents who have studied higher education and/or hold high level positions in the community.

When the authors of this report reflected on collective conversations with Yirrkala School staff and a number of parents, they agreed that the most commonly held view was that young people benefit from having degree qualified parents. This does not mean that these young people were eligible to study
higher education straight from year 12 but they indicated that they held aspirations and intended to further their education. A number of degree qualified parents had sent their children to boarding schools. Some families consistently school their children away from the community, but also keep them actively involved in the community. The authors agreed upon reflection that children from these families appear to carry stronger and higher educational aspirations and tend to perform well at school. The new boarding school at Nhulunbuy means that children will be more comfortable in school as they will be closer to their community and their parents.

In the Yirrkala School students who have higher levels of bilingual language and literacy capability are from strong families in the community and attend school regularly. It is considered that attendance is key for community schooling success and therefore regularly attending students are thought to have greater opportunities to pursue further education. These students have aspirations but not at the same level as the students who have parents with degrees or are schooled at boarding schools. Although attendance is considered a key factor, community members thought that there were many factors that contributed to a successful education.

**Understanding what is considered important – further and higher education versus strong cultural leaders**

Community leaders made it clear that although higher education could potentially lead to higher level positions in the workforce, they do not consider it more important than leadership and governance of the community and cultural aspirations therein. They want young people to embrace both but in a balanced way that does not take them away from their community but instils a sense of commitment to culture and the future of the community.

**Case Study: Yalmay Yunupingu’s Graduation and Study Journey**

The following information presents the education experience of a Yirrkala community leader. Some important features of this experience are highlighted to demonstrate a success story and give insight into some of the common challenges that face remote Indigenous learners in their study journey.

Yalmay is a very experienced teacher who had completed a Diploma of teaching in 1997 and then commenced the Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education (RATE) program in 1998. Yalmay decided to suspend her studies during the time she was nursing her husband (Dr. Yunupingu) through renal failure. In 2015 she enrolled at CDU to continue her studies towards a degree as she was unable to be considered as a fully qualified teacher until she had completed the degree, despite having a significant amount of teaching experience. The RATE program was discontinued and she had to essentially continue her studies through CDU with the support of Donna Stephens, WCE Teacher Liaison’s Leader.
The following are some quotes that depict some of the issues experienced during her study journey in 2015.

‘I had studied for a degree previously but didn’t know how to find out where I was up to. I rang around but no one really helped me.’

‘I had to ask someone from elsewhere to help me [in the school]. This person encouraged me and helped me complete my enrolment after having many people involved, going from this one to the next one – around seven people* helped me to get sorted out.’

*This included three people from WCE Initiative and two colleagues.

A friend and colleague of Yalmay’s assisted her to find a tutor and complete the paperwork. Had it not been for this person, who was not associated with the WCE initiative or CDU, access to a tutor would not have eventuated. This colleague of Yalmay’s commented as follows:
‘Engaging in higher education has led to immense frustration because of the paperwork required and confusing systems. The units that Yalmay has enrolled in don’t match her experience and context and won’t bring the best out of her and help her grow and develop and help the school.’

‘Students studying remotely are just told to get a tutor – but in remote locations it is extremely hard to find a tutor. Tutoring contracts can take a long time to process – it took four weeks.’

Yalmay also experienced issues related to her assessments not being marked, receiving inappropriate advice, misunderstandings and final grades being inaccurately recorded. Fortunately, these matters were resolved with support from her colleagues and WCE staff, and eventually Yalmay completed her degree in 2015. She attended her graduation ceremony in 2016.

The challenges for Yolŋu students studying remotely should not be underestimated. Study support for remote Indigenous students needs more commitment. This was just one case but WCE staff came into contact with other students who experienced similar issues.

Another Indigenous student from Yirrkala wants to finish his degree and keep moving on to other higher level courses. The challenges this student experienced included:

- the on-line focus was difficult for him
- there was a high turnover of tutors and CDU staff and this made it very confusing
- it was perceived that Nhulunbuy CDU campus staff were not helpful and he experienced many issues through that office [prior to 2016]
- He had to re-enrol or carry over units from semester to semester due to finding the course hard with many assessments that the student was not confident to do without support
- Although Indigenous support services were helpful there needs to be more help and support for Yolŋu students
- It was perceived that CDU does not understand Yolŋu students and treats them very generically like they are the same as non-Indigenous students or Indigenous students from cities.

This student suggested that CDU needs to provide specific support measures that foster confidence and support students to continually build skills and strengths one step at a time at their own pace.

From a discussion about how CDU could resolve these problems for students in Yirrkala, the following was suggested:

- Recruit a Lecturer to run the CDU Yirrkala office and this person to recruit and support Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) tutors
- Yirrkala students studying with CDU to have access to CDU office and computers
- Upgrade computers
- Have facility available after school for students to have a place to study
- BIITE to have access also to the facility
- CDU and BIITE to have a better understanding and presence in the community
- CDU to invest more in remote communities to really drive courses and study assistance
Families as First Teachers

From discussions with staff including Yolŋu teachers working at Families as First Teachers (FaFT), Yolŋu and non-Yolŋu teachers at the Yirrkala School and families, there is evidently a strong commitment to the FaFT program. The FaFT program is a holistic place-based program delivery that has been operating since 2009 to:

- link parents with schools and services they need;
- promote the importance of the early years;
- improve developmental outcomes; and
- prepare children and families so they are ready for school.

In Yirrkala mothers and other family members in the community come to FaFT to learn about different activities to keep their young families healthy, involved in the community and to also teach about culture with their children around. The FaFT facility is considered as a safe environment for mothers and other families to attend with their children. They conduct many excursions to help the mothers develop healthy living knowledge, participate in fitness activities, receive adult education and prepare meals together. Two Yolŋu FaFT workers, one in Yirrkala and one in Gunyangara, are currently enrolled in Certificate IV in Early Childhood Education and Care. The qualification is like an assistant teacher but a very different role. They are a critical support for families and engage in community liaison responsibilities for interconnecting agencies and also undertake planning and event organising and resourcing. These positions involve running play group but at the same time building the capacity of families. They teach adults as well through an intergenerational approach, targeting two different audiences at once. The facility and the programs are very encouraging of mothers and their babies to attend and each activity has involved many families.

The community see the link between FaFT and the healthy living model that arises from the program as a critical factor that enables the young children to be more capable at school. The health and emotional wellbeing training that is part of the FaFT program has had an important impact on the mothers and their children.

Although there is no data available to indicate academic-based success of the FaFT program, a number of communities have suggested that the program is creating cohorts of pre-schoolers that are more prepared and ready for school. Although anecdotal evidence only at this stage, Yirrkala community members believe that it is a strong program that will be of great benefit in the long term. Senior teachers from Yirrkala School have indicated that pre-schoolers coming from FaFT have more school readiness and a much easier transition than other children who have not been involved in FaFT.

Research Development and Mentoring

A body of research relating to the Yambirrpa (fish trap) metaphor is being developed. This is a culturally rich metaphor with many layers of meaning. Publications, videos and other resources including stories are being collected. It is hoped that a book or another form of recording of the research will result from this work. This support is intended to result in a collection to use as evidence of research for a community leader to apply to do masters research or have the collection recognised as an academic piece of work.
The Yambirrpa metaphor is used in many different ways in the school and community as a foundational learning tool and has application to explain cultural concepts in a Western manner. There is a growing interest by community members including young people and other agencies to learn more about Yambirrpa. The community and other agencies want to support further research and enable a specific collection. It is important to capture and record this knowledge from the Elders so that it may be preserved.

**Bringing Communities Together**

This photo tells the story of how WCE has assisted to bring people from other communities together. Leon White who is currently the Principal at the YHS was working as a lecturer for Batchelor College the 1980s when Valda and Geoffery were his students. All these years later they met again at the WCE Schools Councils Gathering forum held in Yirrkala.

WCE has brought together many community leaders on a regular basis. Djuwalpi Marika stated that:
‘It has helped us all work together in the spirit of community engagement and has empowered us to talk about the issues in a forum where we all feel confident that we are being heard.’

A further quote by Djuwalpi Marika about working with people from the six other communities involved in the WCE initiative:

‘When we come together we feel oneness, and we feel that there is a gap that needs to be filled and this opens people’s discussions. It is the spirit of the WCE, it is like a window and it is also like our journey and has cultivated our confidence. We see a different perspective and we grow through that experience, expectation and ideas. It is a challenge that inspires our destiny and builds our pride in Yolŋu voice and engaging with Yolŋu people and sitting on the ground at Yolŋu level. Like sitting under the tree or around the campfire and we are all sitting at the same level and we can see each other talk about what our future will be. Our spirits are connected and there the power of the solidarity, our voice which has force that gives the strength to move.’

‘We feel happy when we see each other, we become a family and we are overflowing with positive expectation. We see there are positives and the negatives and we build our understanding about life and in the future together.’

Community Based Leaders Employed by CDU or Involved in the WCE

The WCE initiative in Yirrkala engaged Yolŋu staff in Yirrkala who were employed by CDU or associated through the service agreement. This meant that community leaders were being engaged to be involved in meetings, conferences, workshops, gatherings and other important WCE team events. It also enabled community leaders to have presence in the CDU Casuarina campus so that CDU staff and students could learn from the rich cultural knowledge and stories that were shared. This has resulted in collegial relationships and friendships.

Two community leaders were acknowledged as Honorary CDU University during the WCE initiative. The application process was supported by WCE staff.

Key lessons learned

Yirrkala WCE staff have worked closely with campus-based WCE staff members over the past two years. They believe that the engagement process was successful and they would like to see it continue with more structure now that there are some key areas identified to target. They would like to formulate proposals and submissions to seek funding to allow the community to move forward and make sustainable improvements to forging education pathways for the community.

‘I think it is a bit hard to understand the changes that have resulted from WCE and what changes were already underway in the school and community, but I don’t think we should separate them out like that – there has been a lot of things that you guys are doing that relies on a number of individuals and their knowledge and input, and therefore these things would not have happened without the WCE – from what I am hearing around the community, the seeds have now been planted, people are talking about change – this is the first step but now we need to put systems in place to action those changes.’

– Yirrkala literacy production worker at Yirrkala School Language Production Centre.
‘I can see that having WCE here has helped us know what lies ahead – the pathways that we need to tackle and we can do that if we have an education background – we know we need those tools.’

– Yirrkala community leader.

‘The best part about being in partnership with the school and uni is a good way of working together – finding ways together for children’s pathways for team teachers – Yolŋu teachers pathways to jobs and when children leave school.

– Yirrkala education leader.

Yolŋu School Leadership and Teacher Training

Yolŋu Teacher Development

Each school has between eight and ten Yolŋu teachers whose career development is being supported, mostly at Certificate III or IV level. Five of the YHS teachers are completing an Advanced Diploma. In addition to this there are two FAFT workers (one in Gunyangara and one in Yirrkala) also studying together with the Yirrkala School group. To bring these students to this level takes a great deal of work and support from both schools and BIITE. All of these teachers study as part of their teaching positions. Due to the impact of cultural/ceremonial, family, illness and other related issues, each unit of competency can take long periods of time to not only be completed but also to be conceptually understood to enhance teaching practice. The Yirrkala School teaching staff consider that the ongoing in-school tutoring together with the classroom teaching is key to the learning and support process and therefore they do not push the students just to complete each unit without the other activities and support. Currently in the Yirrkala School an ITAS tutor supports the team teachers with their study units and a visiting BIITE lecturer oversees the attainment and signing off of each unit of competency. In the YHS there is a dedicated full time non-Indigenous lecturer who supports the homelands teachers. From observations and feedback provided within the YHS and the community during the WCE initiative, the YHS model is considered a very strong model with homelands teachers progressing very well in their studies and also as classroom teachers.

Whilst these student numbers are encouraging, it will be some years before these teachers will become degree qualified and able to be considered as fully fledged teachers. In the interim there are three degree qualified senior teachers in the Yirrkala School and there is a large expectation on them for school leadership, cultural-based curriculum input and maintenance, teaching in classrooms, coordination of cultural activities, programming and other responsibilities under their designated positions. For example, one of the Yolŋu teachers is a Principal-in-training, one is the Senior Linguist and the other has been teaching in classrooms and supporting the Yolŋu team teachers. They are all very passionate and work tirelessly to meet all of these demands plus the demands of visiting consultants, government, other professionals and visitors. All three teachers have family and community responsibilities and are nearing retirement age.
Yolŋu Support for Team Teachers

Support for team teachers provided by other Yolŋu is crucial to their professional development and to their role in the school in a broader sense.

Quotes from:

‘Having that funding for me to work with the Yolŋu teachers and mentoring them, I quite enjoyed that not only for me but looking at the leadership of Yolŋu teachers working with other teachers.’
– Yirrkala teacher/mentor.

‘I would like that funding to continue for that training because it gives Yolŋu teachers an opportunity to study for working with Yolŋu who are qualified and unpacking all that language and making them understand.’
– Yirrkala teacher/mentor.

Yolŋu principal-in-training

A further issue is that the Yolŋu principal-in-training position will not be continued in 2017. This will then limit the opportunities for Yolŋu teachers to eventually fill the principal position at the Yirrkala School unless they meet the selection criteria for the position. The principal position entails business management and administrative skills which may make the position out of reach for the senior Yolŋu teachers. At this stage it is not known who will be the principal in 2017.

‘Yolŋu principal in training or assistant principal– we want to see that happen but the funding is not available – it has gone to Brighter Futures and it is stopping – we would like to see CDU help us with the funding for that position – like a training centre for the school connected to CDU.’
– Yirrkala education leader.

The following extract from Dr. Marika (1998) refers to a mentor system in the Yirrkala School many years ago:

‘A system of mentor training was introduced, with Aboriginal teachers working side by side with Balanda, with equal pay. The relationship is one of partnership. This mentor system continues today as well. The curriculum became more Aboriginal. Our language became a valued part of teaching and learning. Classroom practice and management became more Aboriginal and an Aboriginal-oriented curriculum was introduced. For example, students spent a lot of time out of the classroom on visits to important cultural sites.’
CDU Presence and Bringing Awareness of Pathways for Further and Higher Education

CDU’s presence in the community

People in the community have expressed that they see there is benefit in having CDU’s regular presence around the community. Some community leaders believe that people in the community are talking about further education more now as they have more awareness about the university and feel more comfortable and confident in seeking advice. This extends to research projects that a number of community members have sought advice on also.

Stakeholder quotes

‘People in the community see you and ask questions and getting curious and seeing CDU as part of the community – wanting to learn about what is happening in the community – sharing and caring and finding ways – if people see you walking down the street, they say that’s [WCE staff member name] and think – what can I do or what can I say to make my life better through djama [work] or study. You are like a beacon, someone sits there and asks how can I get a job how can I do study – to see you is like a beacon they think there is someone I can go to.’

– Yirrkala education leader.

‘Having CDU as a partner has meant that we are tackling issues side by side – shaping Yolŋu to be better equipped. All of the things that you have been doing here in Yirrkala over the two years so much and so many great things that we have all been part of.’

– Yirrkala education leader.

‘The community approaches you and you make them think about furthering their knowledge and education and you present well to them – they look to you and we have that two way learning happening with you here. We have a better understanding now. There are a lot of kids building their knowledge which CDU has become part of. It is like the centre of our learning.’

– Yirrkala education leader.

‘Having CDU here makes me feel that something is happening and sets a foundation that I can work with so we can build our hopes strong. This foundation needs to become more solid like concrete, nice and strong and we can then feel that we can accomplish things – gives us hope!’

– Yirrkala community leader.

Improving awareness about ‘what is higher education?’ and ‘what is VET?’

• More understanding needed around community context, community needs and individual needs
• More promotion in communities about what study assistance is available
• Strong demand for study skills, academic writing and study pathways
• Communities want educational institutions to work together in communities ‘in partnership’
• Prospective students don’t know what is possible or how to get started
• Confusion about where to get support for each step
• Difficulties with navigating university website
• Online environment and enrolment process is challenging

Training in the Community

‘We don’t have adult education – like a bush university to get all training so like CDU being a central hub so the artists and other workers and teachers can get training.’

– Yirrkala education leader.

There are a number of RTOs and trainers that visit the community. MEP do run some courses but usually use external trainers. This training is usually associated with trades. BIITE deliver a number of VET courses including Certificate IV TAE, Conservation and Land Management and Education Support.

Conversations between WCE and Miwatj Health have highlighted the need for introducing a Certificate III in health. It was envisaged that this course be run through the Yirrkala School. However due to the busy schedule and heavy workload associated with the NTCET students and those teachers involved, the system cannot currently offer choices for VET within the school. Currently the Conservation and Land Management course is the only available VET course in the school. There have been work placements for year 10 students with organisations in the areas of education, health, and cooking. This demonstrates that students have an interest in these areas. The school is exploring how they may accommodate more VET courses.

Through the WCE initiative, conversations were started with Flinders University in Nhulunbuy. A visit to the facility took place. There is a relatively new facility in Nhulunbuy with a simulated hospital ward using electronic mannequins and there is the potential to have school groups visit this facility. This could inspire young people to consider health and para-medical related professions linking between the YS, Miwatj Health, Flinders University and CDU. The school and community are interested in finding out more and exploring the potential with health and medical programs.

Training and Employment Challenges

• Some people in the school are disappointed that they can longer offer music and other courses for students due to funding reductions.
• Through the WCE initiative, we have identified limitations concerning the MEP CDP program. There are barriers that exist for those registered through Centrelink entering employment with the school. From discussions with community health organisations there have been limitations also. This has been disappointing for the community as they are not able to assist those young unemployed people to attain positions in the school or through organisations. The YS and MEP have been meeting together to overcome these issues and plan ways to work together so they can recruit to positions in a streamlined way that can pay people a reasonable wage and not just the CDP or Centrelink amount.
• People in the community are also concerned with the volume of non-accredited training happening in the community and there is a strong sense by community leaders that all training should have a qualification outcome.
• From discussions with Group Training NT (GTNT) there are a number of traineeships and cadetships that are available for teachers and health workers. However, it has been revealed that the GTNT process is not viewed by community organisations very favorably as it is complex and confusing.
for employers and workers. Some organisations in the community are not interested in looking at the GTNT programs due to previous negative experiences. It would be useful for community organisations and GTNT to work together to formulate a more streamlined approach that has reduced complexity and can meet community needs.

- CDU higher education lecturing, training and support is not consistently provided or visible in the community.

Retaining and strengthening bilingual and bi-cultural education

The YS has proven for over 42 years its commitment to bilingual and bicultural education. The community has fought hard to retain their focus to continue to deliver an education system that connects and embraces the Yolngu identity and knowledge system. This is a strong model and one that is predicated on Yolngu people learning their own language first. The following extract from MacMahon and Murray (2000) articulates the reason that bilingual programs are important:

‘The acquisition of literacy in two languages is one of the educational aims of bilingual education. In Aboriginal Australian bilingual programs, the learning of English as a Second Language is one of these languages. Bilingual education, as theorised and developed in Aboriginal Australia, is not, however, just about literacy acquisition, or the maintenance and preservation of first language and culture. Both the Yolngu community at Yirrkala and Arrernte communities in Central Australia have developed their own model of bicultural education. These models develop the knowledge the children bring to school with them to develop their cultural understandings and uses these understandings to help them access knowledge from the non-Aboriginal world.’

Figure 49: Yirrkala community members promoting the bilingual program.
During the commencement period for the WCE initiative the recommendations from the Wilson Report (Wilson, 2014) were being rolled out. The community was very concerned that bilingual schooling would be discontinued under the recommendations arising from the report so they held a 40 years of Bilingual Education Celebration to stand firm and highlight the achievements of the 42 years of bilingual education. This celebration was attended by people within the school and community, CDU, BIITE, NT Government and many others. It demonstrated widespread support for bilingual education and recognition of this successful education system that the community continues to advocate for.

Research Development and Collections

The Yirrkala Community is a community that has been involved in much research since the 1960s. There are many videos and other published and unpublished collections. The data and information collected relates to history, education, health, metaphors, land ownership, cultural foundations, knowledge systems and so forth. These collections are currently spread around the community, the region, the Territory, nationally and internationally. Within the community there are numerous holding places including Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation, Buku Larnggay Mulka, Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation, Northern Land Council, Laynhapuy Homelands Association, schools, external organisations such as universities and government. Individuals also possess family related material.

WCE staff have been building a collection of Yambirrpa stories as part of a body of work that will enable adults and young people to learn more about the dimensions of culture and practices associated with Yambirrpa. Although quite a lot of material has been found there remains material and resources that the community is aware of but cannot access.

There is no research and evaluation agency based in Yirrkala. A number of community members have started to consider what an agency of this type could look like and which organisation in the community would be best placed to sponsor or auspice such an agency. Once the community is ready to develop this concept further they may also look at having a central point of access with a catalogued database to enable easier access to publically available information and secure access for other more sensitive material.

The WCE initiative has enabled a comparative focus across six communities in the first instance, and a wider lens capturing the strengths of community-led schools and in particular bilingual and bi-cultural schooling in the NT. Emergent findings regarding community-led schools that incorporate bilingual education highlight the strength of Yirrkala School’s community led and bilingual model. Through WCE discussions with the NT Department of Education (NT DoE) and Yirrkala community leaders it was considered that a research and evaluation project to compare and contrast different community-led schools in the NT would enable the identification of factors that promote success and the features of a successful community-led school model. This research and evaluation could utilise the Yirrkala School as a central point for explorative purposes to tease out important learnings. According to the Chief Minister’s media release in May 2016 and the Labor party’s Strong Schools, Good Outcomes, Great Opportunity report, the intention is to reverse some of the CLP’s Indigenous education review policies. This would see the decision making in remote schools entrusted to communities and introduce community-led schools with local school boards made up of community members to re-connect the education system with the local people (Gunner, 2016).
Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)

The community understands that LLN is an issue for Yolŋu people and presents barriers to higher education. They also appreciate that VET courses are more practical for employment purposes. A number of community leaders have suggested that LLN be embedded in the VET courses in a way that addresses needs more specifically to the skills required for employment but also allows for an advancement of LLN based skills. They also stated that it is at school where LLN needs more focus and that programs such as FAFT should integrate higher levels of LLN in the future.

Future Directions

1. Yolŋu teacher professional development
   - Consideration of two positions in the Yirrkala School for Yolŋu Team Teacher study and professional development support: 1. A dedicated part time Yolŋu teacher to support and build Yolŋu teacher capacity and 2. A dedicated part time teacher work closely with BIITE to ensure unit completion to support team teachers complete units
   - More investment to professionally develop, train and support Yolŋu teachers to gain qualifications towards a degree equivalent level
   - A permanent Yolŋu principal-in-training position

2. Retain bilingual education in Yirrkala
   - The community has made its strong position on bilingual schooling very clear. It would therefore be of interest to seek investment to strengthen and continue this successful model.
   - It would also be of interest for the community to undertake research and report on what makes this model an exemplar and what it will take to continue or strengthen the model for sustaining and enhancing for the future of the school and community.

3. Community-led school exemplar research and evaluation
   - Develop a proposal to provide a comprehensive report on the Yirrkala School bilingual schooling and other programs including the Yambirrpa Schools Council governance model to demonstrate an exemplar of a community-led school.

4. CDU presence to promote awareness of higher education pathway development and research opportunities
   - For CDU to have a dedicated position located in or regularly visiting the community with knowledge of the barriers to higher education and the relevant higher education courses. An understanding of the pathways from VET to undergraduate degrees is a critical component of this position.
   - It is also important for this position to support and enable researchers to develop cultural research based projects that are able to be recognised in the CDU research post graduate system based on alternative pathways. This position will provide access, support and encouragement so that formal research in the university is enabled and Yolŋu knowledge is acknowledged and valued at a high level in the academy.
5. **Nhulunbuy CDU Campus**
   - Build closer links with the Yirrkala community to provide more VET study options and build in study support mechanisms.

6. **Training in the community - partnership with Yambirrpa Schools Council or other community managed organisations**
   - For CDU and BIITE to partner with the community to support education pathways and provide a stronger link for the community to establish fluid and achievable VET to higher education pathways.
   - More training available in the community – post school and adult education options.

7. **Other University partnerships**
   - For the community to have active engagement with a number of universities to provide different study options, different locations and facilities.

8. **Investment in NTCET and other course delivery**
   - More investment in enabling students to have more subject choices in year 11 and 12 so they complete their NTCET in the community. For example: teaching, music, health and cooking.

9. **Central research and evaluation agency**
   - Investment in the development of a concept plan to advance and enrich research and evaluation in the community. This concept is premised on a training and advisory agency and a central hub for holding and keeping research material and resources that links in with existing holders of historic and cultural records such as the LPC in the Yirrkala School and Buku Larrnggay Mulka.
   - There is a need for a catalogued and organised database as a centrally accessible place to undertake research and access material in an ethical and sensitive manner.

10. **Yambirrpa research**
    - Continue to develop the Yambirrpa research collection for the purposes of a community record of a culturally rich and useful metaphor across many landscapes – school, community and for non-Indigenous people to learn about the deeper layers of meaning to understand Yolŋu culture.

11. **Mentoring researchers through CDU**
    - For a local Yolŋu person to undertake an education history research project to collate materials and resources pertaining to the history of education in Yirrkala. This could involve bringing together existing resources and other materials under the supervision and guidance of a community representative and a university research supervisor. This project will enable a full collection of the history of education in Yirrkala to be collated. There are many people in Yirrkala who have strong cultural knowledge and are interested in undertaking research work to allow their knowledge to be recorded and available for future generations. Many of these people are interested in receiving formal acknowledgement for their work either academically or through books and videos. There have been numerous research activities in the past, however seldom do Yolŋu people receive academic acknowledgement even though their knowledge is considered at a professorial level.
being the knowledge custodians over specific elements of culture bestowed to them by Elders who have since passed on.

12. **Yolŋu matha app**

   - Seeking further investment and support to continue the development of the Yolŋu Matha App to add a further avenue of learning Yolŋu Matha language and culture for students.

13. **Leadership and mentoring**

   - Investment in the school to have a student mentoring program that enables confidence and leadership skill development from having regular presence of role models and strong Yolŋu mentors and leadership.

14. **Bush University concept plan**

   - Investment in the development of a plan for an education and training future in the community. A strategic business model that describes the concept of a Bush University. Bringing together a collaboratively developed concept based on ideas and foundations that are premised on a local governance body potentially comprising of Yirrkala and Homelands schools and key community-based organisations (for example - Laynhapuy Homelands Corporation). This would involve bringing together training and education agencies, government and funding partners.

15. **Community management of the CDU Yirrkala Office**

   - For the YHS to take over the management of the CDU Yirrkala Office as a permanent arrangement to be used as a training and education centre attached to the YHS

16. **Yirrkala Training Centre access in the community**

   - For NT Government to advise how the community can access the Training Centre
   - For NT Government to allow the community-based schools to manage or caretake the Training Centre (the old school premises located next to Buku Larnggay Mulka Arts Centre).
Key message for WCE to pass on

Evaluation and evidence - Yolŋu Way

During the process of engagement in the community it was sometimes difficult to attain evidence that could be succinctly placed in a report. The engagement was happening and WCE staff were building relationships and becoming known and accepted in the community and learning from the grass roots how life, education, employment, culture and everything else co-exists and plays out in a community. There was a lot to be learnt and taken in and then sorted for reporting purposes. Over time a number of activities began to be delivered and shared between CDU and the schools. The difficulty was to produce evidence that supported the outcomes of the engagement, as it is difficult to measure and visible effects of such a broad scaled process take time to appear. Having a service agreement with key performance indicators provided a degree of guidance for the reporting of outcomes. Discussions with a number of community members about how to best document the evidence were held on many occasions. These discussions raised some concern by the community leaders because they considered that the focus on evidence in these type of projects took away from the value of the relationships built and how these relationships were the evidence but more importantly the presence of culture and how that must always remain the key focus and woven onto the outcomes and evidence no matter what the project is about. It was thought that the reporting of this would potentially lose the value of culture and result in a Western based communication that missed the point of community life and how that unfolds.

On one particular occasion the vision, process, evidence and outcomes were being discussed to find the appropriate Yolŋu Matha words to describe the process of evidence gathering. This is how the conversation started and later developed into some interesting thoughts that Djuwalpi Marika shared with WCE staff:

Vision: What do we want to achieve? (Gatjpu)

Process: How will we achieve it? (Djäma)

Evidence: How do we know what has been achieved? (Dhäwu), and

Outcome: What have we achieved (Dhanu’yun ḭunhiyi buku)
Evidence the Yolŋu Way - According to Djuwalpi Marika

There forever for future generations

Discipline

Through songs and stories

Through blood

Through behaviour

I am born to the saltwater, it is in my blood and I take this to my children

When I sing I reflect about what I sing and how we can survive

It is in the song

It is in the land

I am a Rirratjingu man and I have Rirratjingu children

We see evidence differently, we carry it deeper, it is what makes us who we are, our identity

Our action is more than the WCE project, it is ongoing and a long term commitment

All around life and the life cycle

I have to be Yolŋu and die Yolŋu in a Yolŋu world

It is not about squeezing us into the CDU or government system – It is about Yolŋu holding on to their culture and working from their strengths not Balanda strengths

Like the boy at initiation stage – we give him a spear and woomera and he has to go and hunt and learn to survive

We have given CDU (Balanda) this knowledge and you must now take this message that you have learnt.
Appendices

Map of Yirrkala Community

Figure 50: Map of Yirrkala community.
Connections to Country for the Working Group Members

*Figure 51: Map of the WCE Yirrkala Local Working Group Gurrutu’ and which homelands they represent.*
Yirrkala Engagement Network – Nov 2014 to July 2015

By July 2015 most engagement points were established and further explored.

![Social Network Analysis diagram](image)

**Figure 52: Social Network Analysis diagram.**

28 organisations engaged with; 57 individuals engaged with; 177 contacts with organisations in Yirrkala Community

The thick lines between the centre circle and the outside named circles (blue circles) represent the more regular contact that took place. In some instances three to four contacts with the school may have occurred during one field visit over three to four days. The school has a large workforce and a number of school staff represented the WCE Yirrkala Working Group so the thick line in the above illustration reflects this regular contact being actioned through the school.
## Abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Arnhem Education Office:</td>
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Yuendumu Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Evaluation Report
Yapakurlangu-lirnpa
Engaging the Warlpiri people

Ngurlu (damper seeds), artist Geraldine Napurrurla Dixon

Report prepared by
Dr Lisa Watts, Jimmy Langdon, Simon Fisher and Elizabeth Katakarinja
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DISCLAIMER

This report was written by the stated authors and does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative of the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor - Indigenous Leadership of Charles Darwin University. It provides multiple perspectives and reflections on engagement with a range of stakeholders over time and is not intended to be definitive, comprehensive or imply community consensus with the views expressed.

Warning: Images of deceased persons may appear in this report.

SUGGESTED CITATION

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1.0 Introduction

This report focuses on the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) activities and actions developed at the remote community of Yuendumu, northwest of Alice Springs. The WCE initiative employed community-based staff of Yuendumu to develop community engagement strategies and implement actions that aimed to strengthen pathways from early childhood to higher education. Yuendumu community based staff included: Simon Fisher, who performed in the role of Cultural Supervisor and Community Research Leader, Elizabeth Katakarinja and Jimmy Langdon, who performed in the role of Mentor and for a short period, Cedric and Gabrielle Egan, who conducted activities in the role of Youth Leaders. Lisa Watts was based at CDU Alice Springs campus and performed in the role of Community Engagement Leader. Together, both community-based and campus based staff of CDU formed the Yuendumu Education Engagement Team (YEET).

The unique skill set, acquired through decades of living and participating in Yuendumu community, best-placed the community-based staff to consult with the local community on issues of concern and to navigate the relationships between local stakeholders and respective partners. The Yuendumu community hold community-based staff in high regard for their attained status as Warlpiri leaders and level of cultural authority. The community assigned the YEET team rights to articulate and act on the aspirations of the community. Local knowledge, language, and cultural skills are pre-requisites to strong community engagement. Community based staff used a grounded approach to connect with the vast network of elders and leaders, utilising Warlpiri leadership styles, by applying their unique skill set to draw on local knowledge.

The Warlpiri translation of ‘Whole of Community Engagement’ is Yapakurlangu-lirnpa, meaning ‘engaging the Warlpiri people’. In relation to the journey to higher education, the WCE staff focussed on developing and implementing actions across three areas to strengthen: (1) Education Governance; (2) Warlpiri Leadership and (3) Learning Spaces. WCE community-based staff connected with elders, parents and families and built relationships with stakeholders and respective partners to ensure that the whole of community worked together. This was reflected in the key principle ‘jintangka ngalypa-nyina’: we facilitate stakeholders and the community working together as one.

Yapakurlangu-lirnpa (engaging the Yuendumu community) embraces:

1. Recognising the value of local and traditional knowledge systems
2. Integrating the unique management styles of Warlpiri leaders
3. Supporting community-driven processes and local solutions
4. Treating both Western and Indigenous knowledge systems as equals

These distinctive approaches entailed a two-prong process; namely:

1. Talking and listening to elders, parents and families and the youth to gain a Warlpiri perspective on educational needs, strategies and solutions followed by; and
2. Building collaborative relationships with local stakeholders and respective partners through negotiation and agreements on the community’s aspirations and implementing self-determined solutions.

The project design of Yuendumu community supported a bottom-up approach to empower community-based staff to manage collaborative processes to accommodate the myriad of governance structures and

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1 ‘Walpiri’ refers to a group of Indigenous peoples of North-Central and Central Australia
forms of cultural authority found at the local level. These included key education stakeholders: Boards, leadership networks, community members, parents and families.

The Community Engagement Leader and other CDU campus based staff supported the community-based staff throughout the development of this work. This involved building trustful and equal relationships between community and campus-based staff, holding frank and respectful discussion, which were shared at forums and at WCE team meetings.

Figure 1: Location of Yuendumu Community in the Northern Territory (Hinkson 2016).
2.0 WCE community-based staff at Yuendumu

About Jimmy Langdon

Jimmy Langdon is a Warlpiri leader from the Yuendumu Community and works across a range of fields, including: education, leadership, community safety, youth and community development. At Yuendumu, he serves as Chairperson of the Local Authority Board of Central Desert Shire and focuses on bridging *kardiya* (non-Indigenous) and *yapa* (Warlpiri) management styles in relation to employment and service provision. Recently he was re-elected Deputy Chairperson of the Yuendumu School Council. Jimmy is also the Deputy Chairperson of Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) overseeing a vast range of youth services, including cultural mentoring.

About Simon Fisher

Simon Fisher has been a researcher in his own right since the elders of *Pikilyi*, (Vaughan Springs of Mt Doreen Pastoral Lease) appointed him in 1997 to conduct research on the significance of *Pikilyi* to the Warlpiri people. In 2000, Simon Fisher completed the first joint Masters in a University in Australia with co-researcher, Lisa Watts. He has supervised two PhD students at the University of Melbourne and Monash University. Simon is passionate about Indigenous research and has very strong relationships with high profile academics and Universities around Australia. Simon has been working for Pintubi Anmatjere Warlpiri (PAW) Media and Communications for around 12 years. His main role involves the maintenance of the 26 year old Warlpiri Media Archive, including the critical task of digitising video content onto the digital server.
About Elizabeth Katakarinja

Elizabeth Napaljarri Katakarinja is an Arrente woman from Ntaria with Anmatjere and Warlpiri connections and lives at Yuendumu. Fluent in four Indigenous languages, Elizabeth is also a well-known painter and well-known for her strong interest in both media and education. She works in the position of Community Media Worker in video at PAW Media and is experienced in directing and editing short documentaries and presenting community news bulletins. Currently Elizabeth is a Board member on the Warlpiri Education Board, Chairperson for the Yuendumu School Council, Chairperson for PAW Media, Board member of Imparja Television Pty Ltd and Central Land Council Community Lease Working Group. Her commitments show the level of responsibility that Elizabeth upholds in the region across media and education portfolios.

About Lisa Watts

Dr Lisa Watts (MA (hons), PhD) has worked in the remote Indigenous communities of the Northern Territory for 36 years, specialising in applied research in political ecology, social and emotional wellbeing, film and media. In 2000 at Charles Darwin University, Lisa co-authored, the first joint masters in an Australian University with Simon Fisher, a Warlpiri co-researcher from Yuendumu. In 2009, Lisa completed her doctoral studies at the University of Melbourne in political ecology. Lisa is also an accomplished film producer, writer, director and producer of three films screened nationally and internationally Sammy Butcher: Out of the Shadows, Mer Rrkwer-akert (Brooks Soak Country) and Big Name No Blanket, which attained National Documentary Program status and received a jury award from the FIFO International Documentary Festival, Tahiti.
Our principles

*Jinta mani kala yumis*  
We bring everyone together

*Jinta jarri karulu*  
We are united as one

*Jinta mirni mirni*  
We come together to form one solution

*Jinta ngaltja-juku*  
We focus on one vision - education

*Jintangka ngaliypa-nyina*  
We facilitate stakeholders and the community working together as one

Through:
- Connecting with elders
- Connecting with parents and families
- Connecting with stakeholders and partners
- Connecting with the whole of community

Our beliefs

- We believe that we need to find and bring our voice back on issues of health and education, mediating between Indigenous and non-Indigenous domains, by filling the gaps and replacing what was taken away in the past.
- For instance, what we see in the work place today in our communities are local people who do not have the level of degrees to take on management positions or CEO positions.
- The question is ‘Why are not my people (Yapa) reaching higher management level when there has been a lot of educational input into Indigenous training and education?’
- Warlpiri leaders are the most experienced in community development in their community, having spent decades teaching and learning - but still have not reached the top level.
- We need to recognise the qualities of our community leaders and value their contribution to development.
- Engaging the community requires spending time developing relationships and implementing actions to work towards the community taking on the roles and responsibilities of training the young and old.
- It is also important that the community takes the very important step of mentoring and role modelling, and that they stand strong to bring about a better understanding of the work required to ensure flexible boundaries of learning in education.
- It is going back to the basics of leadership, ownership, taking responsibility and leading the way.
3.0 The Warlpiri People

The Warlpiri people are one of the largest Indigenous language and family groups of central Australia, inhabiting the northwest region of the Australian continent. The Warlpiri lands are situated in the Tanami Desert expanding across an area of 292,194 kilometres and encompassing a portion of the Great Sandy Desert. Interrelationships occur with most surrounding language groups living in desert areas, especially the Western Desert and Arandic people.

Remote Warlpiri communities include: Yuendumu, Lajamanu, Nyirripi, Willowra and Ale-kerange; however, Yuendumu is the largest Warlpiri community of the region situated approximately 300 kms northwest of Alice Springs. Traditionally, the Warlpiri people held significant interrelationships with the Anmatyerre people through the overlapping of boundaries, social obligations, spiritual and ceremonial ties that are still strong in today’s terms.
4.0 Conceptual Metaphors

Community-based staff of Yuendumu has used conceptual metaphors to express a Warlpiri worldview to highlight parallels between two polarised concepts: western and Indigenous pathways to higher education. Conceptual metaphors have become a practical tool for both campus and community-based staff of the WCE Initiative to develop a shared understanding of the complexities involved in supporting community-driven processes, and solutions to strengthening pathways to higher education. A metaphorical approach ensures that the cultural and conceptual foundations are embedded in engagement strategies for the development of a socially-orientated educational model, in which the ‘model is no more than a metaphor’ (Howitt 2001p, 80). In these reflections, the model is reflected through the meanings of the metaphor, bringing clarity to what is needed and what will make things better. The WCE community-based staff has utilised the Warlpiri concept of jukurrpa to make metaphorical references to pathways to higher education.

In the Warlpiri world, people lived strictly in accordance with the laws of ‘jukurrpa’, which translations into English include ‘dreaming’, ‘the dreamtime’ and ‘dreaming tracks’. English definitions such as ‘myths’, ‘legends’, ‘folklore’, ‘tradition’ and ‘narratives’ are analogous to jukurrpa; however, translating customary terms into English terminology, renders simplification or creates a risk of devaluing the significance of jukurrpa. Warlpiri epistemology produced a genre of mythological stories that transmits Warlpiri knowledge and conceptions as found in the mythological accounts of jukurrpa. The magnitude and complexity of jukurrpa is phenomenal, embodying Warlpiri biogeography and ontological thinking about waterscapes and landscapes. The actions of the ancestor and the ordered events of the mythology prompt people to mnemonically remember the sequences building a body of knowledge, which is aided by the role of oral instruction and stylised mapping. Warlpiri cultural authority is embedded in jukurrpa and governed by the Warlpiri social organisation.

The Warlpiri social organisation

The Warlpiri social organisation comprises three components (1) the kinship system, (2) the system of subsections and (3) the classification of kirda and kurdungurlu. The Warlpiri kinship system affiliates all members of Warlpiri society that classify kin relations on the basis of descent or marriage, i.e., brother, mother, father, aunt, grandmother etc. The subsection comprises eight subsection groups, in which two subsections are symmetrically linked to form patri-couples that depict father-son (or father-daughter) relationships. This shows that the social organisation of spiritual affiliations and land holding estates are determined by patrilineal descent. Individuals that inherit rights through their father and grandfather acquire the legal status ‘kirda’ that translates to “landowner” or “traditional owner”. Warlpiri traditions systematically delegate responsibilities to individuals that have inherited totemic affiliations to their father’s country (patrilineal). Rites to the mother’s country can be pursued once the responsibilities to the father’s country have been fulfilled. The selection of a partner from the opposite moiety naturally forms kurdungurlu relationships that we readily understand as in ‘in-laws’, signifying the children of female kirda (Watts, 2008).

The Warlpiri metaphor: the Ngurlu (damper) seed

The world of plants metaphorically ascribes the accession to land, rights to territories through inheritance, spiritual affiliation or descent. For instance, a Warlpiri person can inherit rights to land through his or her father, through any four groups of grandparents: father’s father (warringiyi), mother’s father (ngamardi),
father’s mother’s brother (yaparla) and mother’s mother’s brother (jaja) (Watts 2008). Metaphorically, grandfathers have been described as:

‘Like roots of grass. No matter how far the grass goes and how many suckers it throws up, it can be traced back to one original root.’ (McConvell 1998, p.187).

The metaphor of roots, genealogically depicts how children can be traced back to the one ‘root-stock grandfather’ (McConvell 1998, p.188). McConvell states that ‘plant-seed metaphorical complex may be an incoherent amalgam of patrilineal and matrilineal elements of different origin’ (McConvell 1998, p.189).

For instance, plant related metaphors in Yolngu society symbolises the opening of the branch as the revealing of knowledge and the ‘roots’ symbolise secret knowledge. McConvell explains the analogous relationships between the Ngurlu metaphor and the rights and traditions of female children:

In this metaphor children of women of the agnatic lineage are likened to seeds, leaving the plant, perhaps in contrast to the children of the male members who are the branches attached to the father and grandfather trunk. The kurdungurlu, the matrilateral guardian or ‘worker’ for sites and ritual, prototypically a child of a female patrilineal owner, is a kurdungurlu, a ‘seed-child’ at least etymologically (McConvell 1998 p.189). Jimmy Langdon, community based staff is kurdungurlu for this story. He has inherited rights to speak for this story through his wife’s (Napurrurla) family. In the Warlpiri world, the subsections associated with the Ngurlu dreaming, include: Napurrurla/Jupurrurla and Nakamarra/Jakamarra showing both individual and collective rights to one’s grandfather’s country. Langdon purports that myths reflect Warlpiri heritage and their contemporary use helps young people understand the analogies to seeds, trunks, roots and branches. From a Warlpiri perspective, the seeds represent the children, the roots represent the grandfathers and grandmothers, the trunk represents language and culture and the branches represent clans and families. Drawing parallels to the new world, family branches put out shoots, forming new branches and buds sprout green leaves, representing Warlpiri people stepping into a new dimension of learning. The journey and growth of education requires a better understanding of both Yapa and Kardiya ways of learning. Building confidence in Warlpiri people to continue the journey onwards by creating flexible pathways from early childhood to tertiary education will lead to more Indigenous qualified teachers, lecturers and managers. Critically, community engagement is the essence to supporting people to complete this journey.

Metaphorical and critical approaches plant the seed and form deep roots but the understanding rests in the effects of the regulatory systems that Indigenous communities ‘inhere and the conditions under which knowledges and practices become part of alternative development’ (Robbins 2004p.13). The Warlpiri metaphor used here unveils the alternative development journey that, first, requires a responsive approach and, second, addresses the educational needs of the community through supporting community-driven processes. Ngurlu relates to the metaphorical world of plants but also means ‘seed’, referring to grass seeds of the Tanami Desert, mainly spinifex. Langdon describes that unlike trees and plants, seeds are not rooted in the ground but are loosely scattered, dispersed, tossed, thrown according to its journey of germination.

The desert wind comes and blows the sand, which spreads the Ngurlu seed onto the earth’s surface: sunlight, fire and water germinate the seed to grow into spinifex. Women gather the seeds and crush it with stone to make damper. The damper cake feeds everyone in the family. Women also ground the seed and mix it with water to make a sweet cool drink: Ngurlu seeds are naturally sweetened when grounded. Pertinently, in times of severe drought in the semi-arid and arid zones, the use of seeds was critical to the survival of the Warlpiri people. Jimmy likens the Ngurlu metaphor to education being critical to the survival of the Warlpiri people today.
The paintings below are both entitled ‘Ngurlu’ (damper seed) illustrated by Geraldine Napurrurla Dixon of Yuendumu. Both paintings depict germination of seeds into plant life after rain. When the soils of the desert are wet, seeds soak in the flooding of water. In accordance with the seasons, the desert breeze stirred and dried out the seeds, reducing the moisture in the ground, in which to sprout new grasses. The sprouting of new grasses is a metaphorical reference for new dimensions of learning, referring to the alternate education journey between kardiya (non-Indigenous) and yapa (Indigenous) knowledge systems. The alternate knowledge system is a Warlpiri initiative that purports a collaborative approach that synthesizes historical, scientific and cultural perspectives, drawn from both the Western and Indigenous system, treated equally by both. This does not entail a rejection of modernism (Robbins 2004) but the reorganization of social processes, in which remote communities form reinvigorated alliances with government and non-government organisations to create new collaborations on matters of concern using a multi-partisan approach. Moreover, its underlying essence gives equal recognition to both knowledge systems: Western and Indigenous.

Figure 7: Ngurlu (damper seeds), artist Geraldine Napurrurla Dixon
This painting was presented to CDU in exchange for implementing the WCE Initiative at Yuendumu
Figure 8: Ngurlu (damper seeds), artist Geraldine Napurrurla Dixon
This painting will be displayed in the newly established Warlpiri Research in recognition of the contribution of the WCE Initiative to Yuendumu.
5.0 Yuendumu community

Yuendumu community sits on the edge of the Tanami Desert, and is one of the largest Indigenous communities in central Australia with a fluctuating population of approximately 800 – 1000 people. Yuendumu is located within the Yuendumu Aboriginal Land Trust owned and managed by Warlpiri people.

![Arial view of Yuendumu community](image1)

**Missionary days**

The Yuendumu Community was established in 1946 as the Yuendumu Native Settlement, a temporary government ration depot. In 1947, the Australian Baptist Home Mission, a missionary arm of the Baptist Church in Australia administered Yuendumu as a Baptist Mission, including the establishment of its first school in 1947. The Baptist Mission delivered education until the Yuendumu Reserve became Indigenous freehold land under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* Trust and self-government of the Northern Territory was conferred in 1978 under the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978* of the Commonwealth.

![School at Yuendumu Government Native Settlement](image2)
Community-driven educational initiatives

The Yuendumu community has a strong record of accomplishment in developing community driven processes, many of which aim to address the social determinants of health and education. Below is a timeline of the community-driven educational initiatives achieved by the Yuendumu community. The first recorded account on educational advocacy shows Harry Nelson, now a senior leader of very high status, travelling to Canberra at age 21 in the 1950s to lobby the Australian government for Indigenous teacher training.

3. 1990: Development of the Tanami Network, which linked Warlpiri secondary students studying under the then Northern Territory Correspondence School through satellite videoconferencing.
4. 1990: Production of the the ‘Manyu-Wana’ video series, known as the Warlpiri Sesame Street.
5. 1990: Establishment of Mt Theo Substance Abuse program, which tackled chronic petrol sniffing.
6. 2000: Simon Fisher, a Warlpiri leader completed the first joint masters co-authored with Lisa Watts under the then Northern Territory University.
7. 2000: Successful completion of Degree of Batchelor of Education under the then Remote Area Teacher Education (RATE), Batchelor Institute qualifying approximately 20 Yapa (Indigenous) teachers.
8. 2007: Establishment of Warlpiri Education Board which advocates for an independent Warlpiri Secondary College.
9. 2014, the Department of Education (NT) announced the closure of bilingual education. In response, the Yuendumu School worked closely with Pintubi Anmatjere Warlpiri (PAW) Media & Communications to produce Mangarri Panu and Animating Jukurrpa, an animation series, developed from local Warlpiri readers as well as from Warlpiri myths.
The local governance structure of Yuendumu community

The unique leadership and management styles of Warlpiri people of 50 years have resulted in the establishment of a vast range of community-owned organisations at Yuendumu. Local organisations were set up by Warlpiri leaders to address social, education, economic and health needs as identified by the community (see diagram below). Each organisation comprises its own Board of Directors, drawing on local decision-making processes embedded in cultural authority and the collective vision. The list below includes the organisations that provide social services to the community, including:

1. Warlurkurlangu Aboriginal Artists Association
2. Kurdukurdukurlangu Yuendumu Childcare Centre and Playgroup
3. Warlpiri Media Association/ PAW Media and Communications
4. Yuendumu Aged Care
5. Yuendumu Women Centre Aboriginal Corporation (Safe House)
6. Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC)
7. Yuendumu Adult Learning Centre (Jaru)
8. Yuendumu Mediation Centre
9. Yuendumu Social Club (Big Shop)
10. Yuendumu Regional Health Clinic
11. Mt Theo Workshop
12. Tanami Regional Dialysis Unit
13. Outback Stores auspice by the Yuendumu Women’s Centre
14. Yuendumu Outstation Resource Centre

The key message that rests within this framework of self-determination is that Warlpiri leaders have inherent social responsibility to determine the community-driven processes in collaboration with government and non-government agencies. Local governance structures are borne out of the elder’s vision, aspirations and local solutions, leading to community growth and development.
The diagram below, illustrated by Jimmy Langdon shows the local governance structures of Yuendumu from a Warlpiri perspective.

Figure 12: Local governance structures of Yuendumu, illustrated by Jimmy Langdon

6.0 Our actions

The WCE initiative has developed and implemented action-based strategies through partnership development approaches, which aim to shift relationships between stakeholders, government and non-government agencies. This shift is reflected in the principles and practices of the WCE initiatives mentioned above that remedy injustices and inequities through the redistribution of resources and recognition of Indigenous knowledge and skills.

1. Community-based and campus-based staff initially consulted with the CEO of each organisation to seek advice on the correct protocol to gain permission to work with respective local stakeholders and associated community leaders.

2. WCE staff formally approached the Board of Directors of each local organisation with a submission that outlined project objectives and results of early consultations, including: Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC), Yuendumu School Council, Pintupi Anmatjere Warlpiri (PAW) Media & Communications, Yuendumu Women’s Centre and the Yuendumu Mediation Centre.

3. All of the Boards of the above-mentioned organisations endorsed the implementation of the WCE initiative, providing WCE staff to work one-on-one with Warlpiri leaders and develop relationships with local stakeholders.
4. Approaches were also made to the Local Authority Board, Central Desert Shire, Prime Minister and Cabinet and Family and Children Centre to conduct consultations.

5. As the Community Engagement Leader had worked with Simon Fisher at Yuendumu from 1998 – 2000, completing the first joint masters; leaders requested that the Community Engagement Leader continue to work closely with Simon as the WCE initiative rested in the field of higher education. Simon Fisher was recognised by the community as having the most experience in this area.

6. Based on this instruction, Simon Fisher led the consultation with Warlpiri leaders and the community and highlighted key issues of concern, shaping the focus areas. His work was provided as in-kind support to the WCE initiative from Paw Media & Communications.

7. Elizabeth Katakarinja expressed great interest in the program and requested to work on the WCE initiative, providing a wealth of information in relation to education governance. In her role as Chairperson of Yuendumu School Council, Elizabeth Katakarinja requested that all stakeholders come together to discuss their support to the WCE initiative. At this meeting, most CEOs agreed that Warlpiri leadership was a key issue of concern because of the heavy demands currently placed on leaders.

8. Jimmy Langdon was appointed by the Jaru Learning Centre of WYDAC to work on the WCE initiative in addition to Cedric Egan and Gabrielle Egan.

9. Community-based staff consulted with many Warlpiri leaders and families across the communities on issues of concern as identified by Simon Fisher (point 6). These discussions took place in homes, around camp fires, on verandas, mainly in informal settings.

10. As a result of consultation with Warlpiri leaders and families, the WCE community-based staff determined three key focus areas relevant to strengthening pathways from early childhood to higher education as follows:

1. Educational Governance
2. Leadership
3. Learning Spaces

A set of strategic actions were devised to implement the actions and to achieve the overarching objectives of the WCE initiative with a focus on enhancing the educational journeys for all local community members.
6.1 Educational Governance

Aim:
To strengthen the governance of local educational governing bodies through engaging parents and families and collaborating with local stakeholders including:

a. The Yuendumu School Council
b. The Warlpiri Education Board
c. Jaru Learning Centre

Actions:
1. Increase the representation of Warlpiri parents on the Yuendumu School Council through collaborating with the Parents and Community Engagement (PaCE) program, operated by the Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC).
2. Review and update the Yuendumu School Council’s constitution to integrate education regulation.
3. Contribute to the review of the Education Act 2015 (NT) through the Yuendumu School lodging a submission that proposes the term ‘parent of a child’ recognises Indigenous customary law and tradition in relation to the responsibility for a child.
4. Reinvigorate the Warlpiri Education Board College through partnership development and community consultation to work towards establishing an independent Warlpiri Secondary College.
5. Facilitate the partnership between the Yuendumu Mediation Centre and the Yuendumu School to develop the Community Safety School Program, which aims to ensure the safety of children at school through the presence of experienced mediators or cultural mentors, who will work with school staff to reduce conflict in the school yards and classrooms.

6.2 Leadership

Aim:
To explore the networks of Warlpiri leadership using both qualitative and quantitative research methods to develop a better understanding of the varied forms of representation and responsibilities that Warlpiri leaders perform and the significance of Warlpiri leadership to self-determination.

Actions:
1. Conduct a Social Network Analysis to examine the leadership network in terms of Warlpiri representation on boards/reference groups and committees of local organisations in Yuendumu.
2. Conduct a Social Network Analysis to examine the employment networks across the various organisations in Yuendumu to determine pathways for Warlpiri leaders to senior management positions.
3. Collect and disseminate qualitative data on Warlpiri leadership through interviewing leaders on camera to understand the key issues of leadership and education from a Warlpiri perspective.
6.3 Learning Spaces

**Aim:**
To support the development of learning centres by utilising community driven processes that draw on the strengths of Warlpiri culture through building Indigenous research capacity and engaging youth, families and leaders to achieve educational aspirations.

**Actions:**

1. Support the establishment of a Warlpiri Research Centre based at PAW Media and Communications with a focus on building capacity in Indigenous research.

2. Support the archival digitisation project and the repatriation of the Olive Pink Collection held in Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the National Gallery of Australia.

3. Strengthen partnerships with Universities and institutions to acknowledge Warlpiri research protocols.

4. Conduct two Warlpiri research projects designed by Warlpiri Researchers including:
   a. Education History
   b. Warlpiri leadership

5. Support the ongoing development of Yuendumu community graduation celebrations through partnership development to recognise students who have completed VET, Higher Education courses, and the work of Warlpiri employees of local organisations.

**Key partnerships**

The WCE community-based staff formed partnerships with the Yuendumu School, Yuendumu Mediation Centre and PAW Media & Communications. Arrangements were formalised through service level agreements to ensure that:

1. Warlpiri leadership and cultural mentoring was auspiced by the Yuendumu Mediation Centre;

2. Building capacity in Indigenous research at the newly established Warlpiri Research Centre was auspiced by PAW Media & Communications

3. Strengthening the Yuendumu School Council and ensuring the safety of children at school was managed by the Yuendumu School in collaboration with local stakeholders.

Following is a list of achievements resulting from partnership development and relationship building facilitated by the WCE initiative at Yuendumu.
7.0 Our achievements

This section will outline how the actions listed above were implemented. Details will also be provided on the resulting outcomes and an analysis on the educational benefits to the Yuendumu community.

7.1 Educational Governance

The Yuendumu School Council

The Yuendumu School Council has attained a full complement of representation from across the community, reflected in the positions filled below:

1. Principal
2. Chairperson
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Pre School Representative
6. Teachers Representative x 2
7. Family Representative x 12
8. Secretary Mentor

An extra position was created (secretary mentor). Previously the secretary position had been held by a non-Indigenous person. As a result the governance structure more accurately represents students and families of the community because all official positions are currently held by Warlpiri people. A quorum has been reached at each School Council meeting throughout 2016. It is noted that the Yuendumu School Council had not been able to obtain a quorum for a number of years. The shift came about as a result of a collaboration between the Yuendumu School and the Jintaku Mardani (coming together), PaCE project, auspiced by the Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC).

The PaCE project commenced in Yuendumu on 1st June 2014, and aimed to strengthen engagement and participation of parents and community at Yuendumu School and the Jaru Learning Centre. Communication with the Yuendumu School helped strengthen School Council processes by engaging community members in education governance in person, and through text messages, radio campaign and community events. The WCE community based staff were also elected onto the board, alternating the position of Chair at each annual general meeting.

The key finding of this project unveils the importance of developing culturally sound communication strategies within a community engagement framework. It was found that direct interface between Yapa people; in other words, adopting yapa to yapa communication styles through texts, social media, face-to-face conversations and public announcements at cultural events, dramatically enhanced community engagement. Importantly, this work needs to be undertaken by community or youth leaders. One WCE action, which aimed to strengthen the Yuendumu School Council, showed that a quorum could not be reached when kardiya (non-Indigenous) teachers alone approached community representatives requesting their attendance at the Yuendumu School Council meeting. However, when yapa leaders and mentors led the engagement process, the Yuendumu School Council attained full representation. This also suggests the significance of cultural mentoring and the effectiveness of Warlpiri communication styles in community engagement.
The WCE initiative also worked closely with the Yuendumu School Council on forming a partnership with the Council of Government School Organisations (COGSO). WCE staff informed the Yuendumu School Council of the opportunity to contribute to the review of the Education Act (2016) facilitated by COGSO. As a result, the Yuendumu School Council placed a submission that proposed to redefine the term 'parent' to accommodate an Indigenous worldview. Legislation passed successfully changed the definition of 'parent', to recognise Indigenous customary law and tradition in relation to the responsibility of a child, which came into effect on 1 January 2016 to read:

A parent of an Aboriginal child includes a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal customary law or Aboriginal tradition (Education Act (NT). (Northern Territory Government 2016)

Coinciding with this action, WCE Initiative informed the Yuendumu School Council that its constitution of 1987 was in breach of current education regulation. Since this facilitation, the Yuendumu School Council has worked closely with COGSO and updated its constitution to meet current standards.
The Warlpiri Education Board

The Warlpiri Education Board (WEB) was formed in 2007 through a meeting of Warlpiri Triangle educators for the purpose of developing plans to establish an independent Warlpiri Secondary College. This partnership involved collaboration between the WCE community-based staff prior to and during their engagement in the WCE initiative, Yuendumu community, Educational Transformations and the CLC. In December 2015, WCE staff conducted extensive consultations with approximately 20 identified senior leaders, represented on the Yuendumu Lease Working Group. All leaders expressed great enthusiasm for an on-site secondary college as opposed to sending students away to boarding school. As a result, the Leased Working Group passed a resolution in 2016 to contribute $50,000 towards the operation of WEB to undertake further planning. The consultations shifted relationships between local stakeholders and partners, including the Yuendumu School and CLC. The CLC has also requested the WCE staff to conduct workshops to undertake further planning in support of establishing a Warlpiri Secondary College.

Jaru Learning Centre Steering Committee

In 2015, the WCE community based staff worked with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) to establish an advisory board, entitled the Yuendumu Learning Centre Steering Committee to oversee the educational activities of the Jaru Learning Centre. Throughout 2016, WCE staff also worked closely with BIITE to ensure the ongoing delivery of structured courses. WCE staff met with key personnel of BIITE from the Alice Springs campus and gained a commitment to deliver accredited training and to continue to negotiate such training with the managers of the Jaru Learning Centre.

Figure 15: The Jaru Learning Centre involves a partnership between WYDAC, WETT and BIITE governed by a Warlpiri steering committee
Community School Safety Program

A community meeting was held at Peace Park in November 2015, which discussed concerns over the link between bullying and low school attendance. Jimmy Langdon, WCE community-based staff member, facilitated the meeting, which was attended by representatives from a broad range of local stakeholders.

![Figure 16: Community meeting held at Peace Park at Yuendumu, which led to the development of the Community School Safety Program, supported by WCE.](image)

Eddie Robertson, Indigenous Engagement Officer, Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM& C) stated, ‘we believe in education as education is vital for our children’s future - but let’s do something for the families to help their children by putting elders in to the school. We need to deliver the message in the community that the school is a safe place for every child.’

At the meeting, representatives agreed that the presence of elders in school would provide the Yuendumu School with extra resources to offer cultural mentoring to troubled youth affected by community unrest. The solution entailed; (1) local stakeholders working together to provide mediation support to the school on a needs basis, and (2) elders having a regular presence in the school grounds to monitor behaviour. On 23 March 2016, Yuendumu Mediation Committee prioritised the importance of the Community School Safety Program.

At this point, the WCE Initiative formalised a partnership through a service agreement between the Yuendumu School, Charles Darwin University (CDU) and the Yuendumu Mediation and Justice Centre (Central Desert Regional Council). Locally trained mediators from the Yuendumu Mediation and Justice Centre provided the following core activities over two to three days a week, throughout the school terms of 2016, including:

- School lunch time duty roster
- Classroom behaviour management assistance;
- One to one student support;
- Mediations among students;
- Mediations involving parents and teachers, where required; and
- Workshops on conflict resolution, building health relationships, bullying, cyber issues.
Total numbers of mediations include:

- School days: 78
- Days attended by mediators: 45
- Classrooms assisted: 45
- Fights resolved: 7
- 1 on 1 Support/Counselling: 11
- Family mediations: 8

The Yuendumu Mediation Centre has reported that the service has built confidence in the pool of mediators working with young people. The flow on effect has resulted in a partnership development with WYDAC, in which mediation is offered on a weekly basis to address the harmful behaviour of youth. This WCE action strengthened community networks of family authority and responsibility and assisted with building harmonious inter-agency collaboration.

### 7.2 Leadership

Social Network Analysis (SNA) is a methodical study of social networks that examines the linkages between two kinds of actions. This SNA study examined the linkages between:

1. ‘people’ and the boards they are members to better understand the expectations of Warlpiri leaders through their formal representation.

This SNA study then examined the linkages between:

2. ‘people’ and the employment positions they hold in the same local organisation to better understand inequities in employment and education and to develop pathways for local Warlpiri people to fill senior management positions.

#### Leadership networks

Two SNA diagrams were created on the formal representation of leaders serving on Boards in 16 incorporated organisations. We used the term ‘boards’ to describe the unpaid governing body of a not-for-profit organisation, referring to committees, boards, reference groups and councils that are responsible for the governance of organisations that operate in Yuendumu. This helped us determine the level of voluntary or unpaid work expected of Warlpiri leaders in the Yuendumu community.

Diagram 1 (see below) shows a significant network of multiple local boards and committees operating at Yuendumu. The Community Engagement Leader engaged each local organisation in the study to obtain data on the names and numbers of Warlpiri leaders represented on board committee members of the following 16 organisations: Warlpiri Media Aboriginal Corporation, Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation, Yuendumu Women’s Centre Aboriginal Corporation, Warlukurlangu Artists Aboriginal Association, Salt Church Yuendumu Indigenous Corporation, Yuendumu Magpies Football Aboriginal Corporation, The Living Water United Pentecostal Church, Mampu-Maninja-Kurlangu Jarlu Patu-Ku Aboriginal Corporation (Yuendumu Old People’s Program), Warlpiri Education Board, Yuendumu Health Advisory Committee, Yuendumu Mediation and Justice Committee, Yuendumu Social Club, Southern Tanami Indigenous Protected Areas Management Region Committee, Local Authority Board of Central Desert Regional Shire, Child & Family Centre and Warlpiri Education Training & Trust.
Diagram 1 (see below) show that Warlpiri leaders perform on multiple boards and this high level expectation does not include their representation on a myriad of regional committees for instance: the Granites Mine Affected Area Aboriginal Corporation (GMAAAC). Features of the Yuendumu Board diagram include the following data sets:

Size of network: 16 boards, 125 people

Number of Warlpiri people: 118

Average number of boards a person is connected to: 1.624

Board with least members: Living Water (3)

Board with most members: WYDAC (25)

Most number of boards an individual is on: 17(node 18)

Diagram 1: Local boards (in green) with affiliated board members (in red), noted as the formal representation of Warlpiri leaders.
Diagram 2 draws from the same data; however depicts the connections of individuals who sit on three or more boards. The red circles are individual people and the green circles represent the boards or committees as listed above. Features of the Yuendumu SNA diagram of people who are on three or more boards include:

- 19 people on 3 or more boards (all Warlpiri people)
- 5 people on 5 or more boards

Qualitative data was also collected through interviewing prominent Warlpiri leaders on camera, who highlighted the barriers to strengthening pathways to higher education. These barriers are referred to in the recommendation section of this report. These interviews were compiled into a twenty minute video, serving as an appendix to this report. The conclusion drawn is that this high-level responsibility and voluntary commitment that Indigenous leaders make to their community would not be found or expected in urban settings and is seemingly a trend across most remote Indigenous communities.

**Employment networks**

The second aspect of this SNA study examined the linkages between ‘people’ and the employment positions they hold in the same local organisation to determine pathways to senior management positions. Each organisation provided data to the Community Engagement Leader on the numbers of non-Indigenous and Indigenous (local) people employed in the following positions, including:
A **Senior Management**: constitute CEO positions, General Manager, and identified by the community as the boss of the organisation.

B **Middle Management**: constitute Program Manager and qualified employee positions, for instance: doctors, teachers and positions requiring degree level qualifications to perform duties.

C **Low work bees**: assistants, developers, health workers,

Graph 1 shows the total employment by Board-run organisations in Yuendumu according to position type: senior, middle, worker. The graph also shows the breakdown of the employment of senior level positions in board run organisations, which are all non-Indigenous. The second is employment of middle level positions and the third is ‘worker bee’ level positions.

Of the 22 senior management positions in Yuendumu organisations controlled by Indigenous organisation boards, no positions are held by Warlpiri people. As of 2016, 11 middle management positions are held by Warlpiri people, compared with 49 held by non-Warlpiri people. The lowest level positions are overwhelmingly held by Warlpiri people, with most 120 people employed in these position, compared to less than 10 non-Warlpiri people. Having no Warlpiri leader employed at a senior management position shows a lack of equitable representation in local management across the broad range of sectors: health, education, arts and local government. The underdevelopment of pathways makes progress to equity slower as current structures do not accommodate local people driven styles of management that bring cultural dimensions to community management. Simon Fisher, WCE community based staff member suggests that this current model of management draws parallels to African management styles that had been mainly associated with apartheid ideology until Nelson Mandela became the first democratic elected president in 1994.

Evidence suggests to date that the contrast between board level responsibilities and levels of employment is stark suggesting that pathways to senior management positions are greatly in need. As part of this action, WCE staff consulted with Warlpiri leaders, who advised that co-management pathways needs
to be developed within each local organisation. This has resulted in the Chairperson of WYDAC leading discussion with its Board members to employ a Warlpiri person at a senior position, with the aim for other local organisations indicated in this study to follow suit.

7.3 Learning spaces

Establishment of the Warlpiri Research Centre

A service agreement between CDU and Warlpiri Media Association (WMA) trading as PAW Media & Communications was executed in June 2015.

A space was identified, renovated and equipped for the purpose of building capacity in Indigenous research through Warlpiri researchers (1) designing and conducting relevant research projects and (2) digitising archival and repatriating significant research material from relevant institutions.

![Figure 17: WCE works in partnership with PAW Media and Communications to establish a Warlpiri Research Centre.](image)

PAW Media & Communications assigned three spaces: a large room, an office space and an archival storage space. This room has been renovated and refurbished, lined with sound proof padding and equipped with office furniture. Recording equipment has been purchased and set up to record interviews on camera to build capacity in Indigenous research.

This facility will provide a platform for ongoing research development and build capacity in Indigenous research to strengthen pathways to higher education. It will also provide a platform for establishing a Warlpiri Research Ethics Committee, enabling the community greater control over research activities conducted in the community by universities and other agencies.

![Figure 18: The Warlpiri Research Centre is up and running](image)
Archival digitisation project

While the Warlpiri Research Centre was being renovated, WCE staff collaborated with Warlpiri Media Association (WMA) trading as PAW Media and Communications to acquire funds from Granites Mines Affected Areas Aboriginal Corporation (GMAAAC) to repatriate the Olive Pink Collection from AIATSIS and the National Museum of Australia. The aim of this activity was to generate Warlpiri research activity through acquiring access to closed files comprising Warlpiri knowledge of cultural significance.

The Community Engagement Leader commenced negotiations with AIATSIS and the National Museum of Australia in June 2015 over the repatriation of the Olive Pink Collection comprising 800 photos, 12,000 pages of anthropological records. Negotiations also took place with the National Museum of Australia over its Olive Pink artefact collection. For the next eight months, the Community Engagement Leader facilitated access applications and processes in collaboration with WMA. In March 2016, AIATSIS granted permission to WMA through formal agreement with AIATSIS under the Copyright Act 1968, the AIATSIS Act 1989 (Cth) and the AIATSIS Collections Access and Use Policy.

The Olive Pink collection is one of the largest archival collections in AIATSIS and contains sensitive data relating to both Warlpiri and Arrernte culture recorded in the 1930s. For this reason, the Community Engagement Leader was required to collaborate with Lhere Artepe Indigenous Organisation based in Alice Springs to appoint Arrernte senior custodians to work closely with senior Warlpiri leaders of Yuendumu in classifying the material. In April 2016, a group of three Warlpiri and three Arrernte researchers in collaboration with WCE staff visited AIATSIS and the National Museum of Australia in Canberra to examine the Olive Pink Collection and prepare for repatriation.

![Figure 19: Arrernte and Warlpiri representatives with WCE staff collaborate on the repatriation of Olive Pink's Collection. From left to right: Russell Taylor, AM, Chief Executive Office of AIATSIS, Simon Fisher Junior, Baydon Williams, Peter Wallace, Mick Campbell, Harry Jones and Simon Fisher Senior.](image-url)
Figure 20: Simon Fisher supervising research at the National Gallery of Australia

Figure 21: Indigenous researchers examine the significance of Olive Pink’s Papers to Warlpiri and Arrernte culture supported by Lisa Watts, WCE Community Engagement Leader and Liam Campbell, Researcher.
All material has been digitised and repatriated to the Warlpiri Research Centre. Over the long term, Simon Fisher will collaborate with Warlpiri researchers, marking sensitive material and to collect knowledge on unmarked material: all items contained in the photographic and artefact collection have little or no information recorded. It is intended to provide feedback to AIATSIS and the National Museum of Australia, which partnership development will benefit the community for subsequent research projects.

This action was facilitated by the WCE staff to build Indigenous research capacity in the Warlpiri Research Centre, in which GMAAAC also contributed funds. The Yuendumu community is now able to promote the Warlpiri Research Centre to gain ongoing support. For instance, towards the end of this initiative, WCE community-based staff submitted applications to GMAAAC to purchase computers for the Warlpiri Research Centre to assist with sustaining research activities.

**A Warlpiri research project**

WCE community-based staff designed a research project on Warlpiri leadership to demonstrate how Indigenous research builds capacity and strengthen pathways to higher education. This research project involved the WCE staff interviewing a vast range of leaders on camera to collect qualitative data on the link between Warlpiri leadership and higher education. This took place in the Warlpiri Research Centre. At the beginning of this project, WCE staff conducted 11 interviews; some were incomplete or dampened by technical difficulties. Subsequently, WCE Initiative employed Liam Campbell to assist WCE staff to conduct further interviews, in which key issues of concern were highlighted. Warlpiri leaders referred to three major themes:

1. Literacy, Language and Learning
2. Bi-lingual/Bicultural education
3. Warlpiri leadership and self-determination
The production was screened at the Indigenous Leadership Conference at CDU on Thursday 10 November and at the Yuendumu Graduation Ceremony on 8 December 2016. The video can be viewed on vimeo link https://vimeo.com/189525925. Password is ‘cdu’.

**Strengthening partnerships with Universities**

At the Warlpiri Research Centre, Indigenous researchers will use the space to negotiate research protocols to ensure that Universities and institutions adopt culturally acceptable ways of doing research and ensure that Indigenous participation and decision-making underpins all research activities undertaken in Yuendumu. In 2016, a collaboration developed between Warlpiri researchers and Professor Linda Barwick, musicologist, Sydney Conservatorium of Music University of Sydney, musicologist to conduct the ‘Supporting Vitality in Warlpiri Songs’ project, which aims to analyse the maintenance of cultural practices in a rapidly changing world. This research involves the employment of both Simon Fisher and Valerie Martin, formalised in a three year contract. Commencing in 2017, research activity will be conducted at the Warlpiri Research Centre to utilise the archival material that has been digitised under the archival digitisation project. WCE has facilitated some of these negotiations, particularly in relation to ethics.

**Yuendumu Community Graduation Celebration**

The WCE Initiative participated in the 2015 Yuendumu Careers Expo and Graduation Celebration hosted by Yuendumu School on 19 November 2015. The WCE Initiative worked closely with Batchelor Institute (BI) to provide careers advice to students, who showed an interest in further studying. This event began with the Careers Expo at 1pm, followed by the Yuendumu Graduation Celebration held from 3pm to 8pm.
Figure 24: 2015 Yuendumu Graduation Celebration

Figure 25: CDU and BIITE representatives and Warlpiri students at the Jaru Learning Centre, Yuendumu.
Figure 26: The Yuendumu community held its first graduation celebration of over 70 students completing a VET certificate. This required all registered training organisations to collaborate on the event.

Figure 27: Warlpiri esteemed leaders, from left, Lotte and Eddie Robertson presented certificates with Mike Crowe, BIITE.
Figure 28: Families and children of Yuendumu all turn out to celebrate the graduates and awardees.

The events of the day engaged the entire community of approximately 500-600 members. A number of educational activities entertained children and youth, including a Careers Expo, and games and activities that involved visiting almost every organisation in Yuendumu. The event led into an evening barbeque with a live band as entertainment. During the graduation celebration, parents and families watched on with pride as their family members were awarded a VET certificate or recognised for their work in the community.

The 2015 event saw such a high level of engagement that the Yuendumu School proceeded to organise a second graduation celebration for the subsequent year, on 8th December 2016. A visiting representative from the Office of Pro-Vice Chancellor-Indigenous Leadership awarded certificates to CDU graduates and Simon Fisher for his honorary appointment of University Fellow. The occasion allowed WCE community-based staff to provide feedback to the Yuendumu community on WCE actions. It is events like these that inspire children, youth, parents & families to undertake further studies to higher education.
8.0 Key lessons learned and recommendations

1. Implement effective community engagement that adopts a bottom-up approach supported by government and non-government agencies.

2. Integrate Warlpiri ways of doing, seeing and thinking in a two way learning approach from early childhood to higher education.

3. Recognise the key imperatives of *Yapakurlangu-lirnpa* (engaging the Yuendumu community) encompassing:
   - Warlpiri leadership
   - Warlpiri language and culture
   - Warlpiri literacy and numeracy
   - English language, literacy and numeracy
   - Warlpiri pedagogy
   - Warlpiri metaphors
   - Yapa research
   - Bi-lingual / Bi-cultural education
   - Cultural mentoring
   - Warlpiri and Western knowledge systems
   - Elders, families, parents and the local community
   - Warlpiri governance
   - Warlpiri management styles
   - Local governance structures
   - Warlpiri methodologies
   - Community-driven processes
   - Governing bodies and committees
   - Building and shifting relationships
   - Partnership development

4. Develop a network of local Indigenous research centres and organisations to build capacity in Indigenous research.

5. Provide training to Indigenous researchers to build relevant pathways to education.

6. Develop Language, Literacy and Numeracy programs both in language and English for primary and secondary schools and tertiary programs.

7. Integrate and meld Indigenous knowledge systems into the academy, courses and in academic research.
8. Re-instate Remote Australia Teacher Education pathways.

9. Implement community school safety programs to address bullying and cyber-bullying in remote schools and to ensure the safety of children in school.

10. Implement cultural mentoring and leadership programs in remote schools.

11. Train non-Indigenous teachers in Indigenous history to increase awareness about past and contemporary struggles of injustice.

12. Encourage greater collaboration between governments, community and local organisations that acknowledges the important role of Indigenous leaders.

13. Adopt an intergenerational approach in schools by employing Indigenous staff to work directly with Indigenous learners in schools, learning centres and research centres.


15. Provide ongoing support to the development of bilingual/bicultural education.
Appendix

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Funding for this project provided by the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme
Appendix 9 – Models of participatory action research in the WCE initiative

A flexible approach to participatory action research (PAR) was embraced in this initiative. The approaches taken to PAR and therefore project focus areas were in part dependent on the skills and experiences of the campus-based staff who began the initial WCE community project establishment process. A number of campus-based staff members had backgrounds in the research field and were employed as research active positions. Each of them had a differing interpretation of the way in which a PAR process would bring benefit to communities. Across community projects, there were:

- differing degrees of involvement of community-based staff in different stages of the research process
- different people responsible for different elements of the research process
- different research and evaluation questions being asked
- different tools used
- different types of data collected
- different processes for analysis
- different applications of data, and ultimately
- different project outcomes.

The different models of PAR may be conceptualised according to the level of local involvement and the assumptions behind the approach, depicted in a diagram on page 2. This diagram depicts quotes from different CELs to demonstrate their unique perspective on the most appropriate way to implement a PAR process. Each of these approaches has costs and benefits associated with it. For example, implementing a more ‘top down’ research process may appear to be faster and make more efficient use of the existing evidence base, however, is likely to lead to reduced level of engagement if a researcher from outside is seen to be pushing an agenda. This can also put relationship development process in jeopardy and runs a higher risk of pursuing issues that are disparate to the actual priorities and needs of community. This can have serious and long-lasting consequences.

At the other end of the spectrum is seen a heavy community-driven process through all aspects of the research process. Positives of this type of approach were that it is more likely to achieve a higher level of community ownership over the process, findings and therefore outcomes. There is an increased level of investment of time, resources and effort needed to implement this type of approach, which are not always available. In addition, working in this way can also lead researchers to overlook the significant body of evidence that is available, from which relevant lessons can always be learnt.

Individual practitioners will hold their own idea about which is the most worthwhile approach. This is dependent on worldviews, backgrounds, experiences and political ideologies. It is contended here that in the context of a time-limited project, embracing individual approaches to PAR was not in itself a negative thing. It did, however, contribute to the scope of the initiative and of the evaluation being unclear – and also led to resistance to sharing information for broader team use.
Campus based team member leads research process and analyses data based on consultations with local community members; community members participate in elements of the process.

‘... Working with community from the ground up, engaging with them, understanding the issues on the ground. Working out with the community leaders - and it’s not always community leaders - it’s good to engage with young people and business, other organisations in the community too... Just getting a good handle on those issues. Working out when there’s some avenues to resolve those issues with some pathways or mechanisms that you know from experience that you can put in place. That you can talk about them with the groups that you’re talking to and work out what can work, what might not work, what’s been tried before etc... a little bit of you surge ahead and then you go back and talk and then they send you back out and it’s a bit of that toing and froing.’

Community based and campus based team members work collaboratively on each element of the research process, including collection, analysis and reporting on data.

‘... He was describing it from the terms of like building a bridge together. So he was saying some people, he might for example have the tools to build a bridge, but I might know how to build it and we’ll have to come together to share those materials and to consult and work with each other so that together we can build a bridge and then we can walk across it. And essentially at different times one person might have the tools and the other might have the experience and vice versa. So it’s that constant both ways stuff that comes from collaborating all the way through.’

Community based researchers lead research process, including data collection and analysis, and disseminate research findings within own community.

‘... we don’t know what we don’t know yet so we can’t predict. We know what the issues are in communities so we can talk about there being high literacy and numeracy needs, we can talk about whether or not there’s work experience opportunities for people etc. We can talk about those and they’re common across most communities but are the communities asking for, for example- work experience placements? Is that what they’re asking or is it something different? And I guess that’s what I see this project as offering, is a space to really let the community members lead the way and ask. And I see our roles as facilitating a process where those members ask the questions and we support them to find out the answers. And in that process we might build capacity around research skills etc. but it’s around those questions being raised by those individuals and the solutions being identified and recommendations being identified by those individuals, not by us.'

Figure 1: Diagram to represent varying loci of control of the research process within different models of participatory action research.
Appendix 10 – Communication & Engagement Strategy

Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) Whole of Community Engagement Initiative

Background

The Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP) - Whole-of-Community Engagement (WCE) initiative is funded by the Australian Government. HEPPP-WCE is led through the Office of Pro Vice Chancellor – Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University (CDU) in partnership with North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance Ltd (NAILSMA), NT Department of Education (DoE), Batchelor Institute (BI) and the Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges in Education (ACIKE).

HEPPP-WCE aims to engage up to six selected remote and very remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory to build aspiration, expectation and capacity to participate in higher education. This will be conducted as a multi-site participatory action research project (and ethics approval has been obtained through CDU Human Research Ethics Committee).

The participating communities include:

- Yirrkala
- Galiwinku
- Maningrida
- Gunbalanya
- Tennant Creek
- Yuendumu

These communities were identified using a number of selection criteria related to educational outcomes, partner interest and engagement, existing infrastructure and community interest and readiness.

It is recognised that a whole of community engagement initiative such as HEPPP-WCE, particularly given the nature of working in remote and very remote Indigenous contexts, can be complex and involve a combination of different approaches. For this reason, it is important to have an agreed set of principles and actions that underpin the ways in which all stakeholders communicate and engage with each other at all stages throughout the HEPPP-WCE initiative. This strategy is to be used as a reference document by all HEPPP-WCE stakeholders.

There are a range of communication and engagement issues to consider as part of the HEPPP-WCE initiative. The purpose of this Communication and Engagement Strategy is to:

1. Identify the most likely communication approaches;
2. Outline key communication and engagement principles and actions that will be used during the planning, implementation and evaluation of the HEPPP-WCE initiative;
3. Explain the development of WCE community engagement models;
4. Explain the way that key individuals and organisational stakeholders have been identified; and
5. Describe indicative communication and engagement strategies with key stakeholder groups through HEPPP-WCE.
1. Communication Approaches

It is recognised that a range of oral and written communication approaches will be used throughout the HEPPP-WCE initiative. Some of these will support strategic decision-making. Some will support day-to-day operational functions. Others will support research activities. The list below is indicative of the likely communication approaches to be adopted:

- Individual meetings (e.g. face-to-face discussions, interviews)
- Group meetings (e.g. community meetings/workshops, yarning sessions, Steering Group meetings, story-telling, focus groups)
- Phone conversations and/or teleconferences
- Videoconferencing (e.g. Skype, Blackboard, WebEx)
- Written correspondence (e.g. service agreements, MOUs, project plans, partnership plans, briefs, letters, emails)
- Group forums (e.g. wiki, wordpress blogs)
- Formal reporting (e.g. project status reporting, progress reporting, evaluation reporting)
- Social media use and engagement (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, Linkedin)
- Audio and visual media (e.g. photographs, recordings)
- Research tools (e.g. surveys, diaries, observational techniques)
- Artwork (e.g. paintings)
- Songs
- Dance
- Academic writing and presentations (e.g. research papers, conference presentations, other research translation activities)
2. Communication Principles and Actions

A HEPPP-WCE Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Workshop was held on 29 September 2014, which involved 25+ key stakeholders. This included representatives from partner organisations, various Faculty representatives from across CDU and HEPPP-WCE staff. Two key activities undertaken during this workshop included (a) the review of draft communication principles and development of underpinning communication actions; and (b) a community stakeholder mapping exercise. Other issues to arise out of the workshop discussions included the need to carefully manage stakeholder expectations; striking a balance between practical outcomes and systemic influence; ensuring bottom-up approaches that support and respect community decision-making; and understanding learner beliefs and concepts about education.

All communication will be:

• **Thoughtful** – this will involve adopting a consultative and strengths-based approach; communication will be timely, consistent and regular.

• **Genuine** – this will involve taking time to establish relationships with community leaders and families that are built on trust and respect; expectations will be carefully managed; communication will be community focused, inclusive and transparent.

• **Meaningful** – this will involve clear and concise messaging (not too academic); with the support of community leaders communication will be delivered in local language, wherever possible.

• **Ethically appropriate** – this will involve a commitment to community engagement and decision-making that is guided by national and global Indigenous ethical frameworks; this also involves acknowledgement and ownership of intellectual property.

• **Culturally respectful (in both approach and delivery)** – this will involve an awareness of matriarchal and patriarchal decision-making processes, which will ensure responsiveness to local cultural practices; community leaders will be adequately remunerated for sharing and contributing Indigenous knowledges.

• **Participatory** – this will involve project partners working collaboratively (‘with’ not ‘on’ or ‘about’) to enhance a sense of ownership and minimise feelings of disempowerment; this will ensure that outcomes are directed by, and benefit, the local community.

• **Considerate of, and responsive to, first languages** – this will involve honouring primary/first languages; the use of trained interpreters will also be supported.

• **Underpinned by two-way learning approaches** – this will involve engaging with both Indigenous and Mainstream/Western (academic) knowledge systems equally, with a view of supporting the co-creation of knowledge and aspiration development.
3. Developing Community Engagement Models

Community engagement can mean different things to different people. Invariably this relates to different strategies or mechanisms of engagement – e.g. to inform, consult, involve and collaborate. In the spirit of partnership, the HEPPP-WCE initiative has adopted the general definitions used by BI. These include:

*Inform* – To provide the community with appropriate information to keep them informed.

*Consult* – To capture community input to guide planning and future directions (e.g. strategic directions, issues, policies, priorities and projects).

*Involve* – To work on an ongoing basis with the community to ensure that community ideas, concerns and aspirations are listened to, understood, and where possible incorporated into decision making processes.

*Collaborate* – To place the final decision-making in the hands of the community, where possible.

We acknowledge that there are a variety of community engagement models already in existence. The HEPPP-WCE team does not intend to reinvent, duplicate or recreate existing models. Rather we want to learn from, and build upon, such approaches. Yet, we also recognise the need for community engagement processes that are sufficiently flexible to meet the diverse needs of different remote and very remote Indigenous community contexts. To support our thinking in this space, we have been reviewing literature about community engagement (particularly in Indigenous education contexts) and seeking advice on different community engagement models recently used in remote education contexts across the NT. We are committed to using the Brisbane Declaration - United Nations Declaration on Community Engagement (2005) as an international exemplar for conceptualising community engagement. The nine-step Community Engagement Approach adopted by the Community Engagement team within the Department of Education has also been a useful guide. Likewise, the Cultures of Collaboration model formally adopted through the Centre for School Leadership at CDU in partnership with the NT Department of Education has been an equally useful guide.

The HEPPP-WCE team has agreed that community engagement models for this initiative need to be bottom-up, reflect a both-ways learning model, and be interactive in their design and function. Work is currently underway to document and refine the proposed community engagement model/s across HEPPP-WCE sites throughout the establishment phase of the initiative. Initial community consultations have marked the beginning of this process, negotiated with key cultural authorities within each of the community settings.

We recognise that effective community engagement is central to the HEPPP-WCE initiative. We invested in this concept by establishing three Community Engagement Leader positions as part of the initiative. These roles work alongside other HEPPP-WCE staff and a range of community-based stakeholders, such as Indigenous leaders, families and service providers. These roles also involve working with stakeholders who influence educational opportunities and outcomes, or can support building further education pathways, within each community. HEPPP-WCE is premised on education being a community endeavour. It is not just about the school education goes beyond the business of the School, involving broader range of actors and agencies. That is, it involves a range of individual and organisational stakeholders both within and outside of the education system. Identification of key stakeholders is an essential first step to achieving effective community engagement.
4. Identification of, and relationship building with, stakeholders

During the formative stages of the WCE initiative, HEPPP-WCE staff are expected to identify and build relationships with local and organisational stakeholders, including those identified in the six remote Indigenous communities. To document this process, the WCE staff will undertake comprehensive stakeholder and network mapping tasks, enabling analyses of relationship building and shifts in relationships. Stakeholder and networking mapping processes will be undertaken at key intervals throughout the duration of the HEPPP-WCE initiative. This will assist HEPPP-WCE staff to strengthen existing relationships, build and participate in relevant networks, and identify and address stakeholder relationships that hold tension. This will provide greater support to enable collaboration and partnership development.

5. Indicative communication and engagement between groups of stakeholders

Communication and engagement between project partners
- Formal partnership agreements will be established between CDU and each project partner.
- A Steering Group consisting of a representative from each partner organisation will meet at least quarterly to discuss and guide progress. This group will also include nominated community-based representatives.
- There is regular written and verbal communication between HEPPP-WCE initiative partners.
- There is a commitment to open and frequent communication.

Communication and engagement between HEPPP-WCE team members
- A joint HEPPP-WCE team induction facilitated in September 2014.
- All HEPPP-WCE staff members to meet together via teleconference on a monthly basis.
- HEPPP-WCE regional teams and individual staff to meet with the Program Manager on a fortnightly basis.
- Community Engagement Leaders are encouraged to meet regularly.
- Mentor and Enrichment Officers are encouraged to meet regularly.
- HEPPP-WCE staff to act as the primary conduit with remote/very remote Indigenous staff employed through the initiative (e.g. researchers/leaders/mentors/interpreters).
- Face-to-face team forums planned and held at least every six months.

Communication and engagement with internal stakeholders within CDU
- HEPPP-WCE staff meet regularly with internal stakeholders on a frequent basis. This includes representatives from various areas of the University such as Faculties and Schools, the Northern Institute (NI), Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL), Centre for School Leadership (CSL), Menzies School of Health Research (MSHR), Office of Research and Innovation (ORI), Media Advancement and Community Engagement (MACE), Research Centre for Health and Wellbeing (RCHW), among others.
- Formal Service Agreements established with the School of Health and RIEL. These will support evaluation, research and program functions and deliverables associated with HEPPP-WCE.
• HEPPP-WCE staff, where appropriate, to be nominated to attend CDU-wide committees and forums – e.g. School Engagement Committee.

• HEPPP-WCE staff to communicate through existing internal governance structures, such as Faculty Research and Research Training Committees, Faculty Learning and Teaching Committees and Faculty Executive Groups.

Communication and engagement with external stakeholders

• HEPPP-WCE staff to work with stakeholders external to the University.

• HEPPP-WCE staff to present at relevant conferences and contribute research outputs associated with the initiative as a research translation endeavour.

As the initiative unfolds, it is envisaged that additional external collaborators will be identified and engaged to support the achievement of objectives of the initiative.

Communication and engagement with remote and very remote Indigenous community-based stakeholders

• HEPPP-WCE staff to engage a range of Indigenous leaders, families and service providers prior to, during, and post community-visits.

• HEPPP-WCE staff to visit each participating community at least once per month, based on community needs, expectations and preferences.

• HEPPP-WCE staff to commit to a two-way learning approach in all community interactions. This includes a commitment to engaging in Participatory Action Research (PAR) approaches in accordance with respective ethics clearances.

• HEPPP-WCE staff to develop community partnership agreements in consultation with key community stakeholders. This will outline preferred communication and decision-making mechanisms and strategies (e.g. Community Reference Group).

• HEPPP-WCE staff to acknowledge that local Indigenous people are the custodians of Indigenous knowledges and practices in their community and bring with them unique understandings and research contributions. It is expected that local Indigenous leaders/researchers/mentors will be employed on a casual and/or part-time basis to achieve HEPPP-WCE objectives; and that HEPPP-WCE staff will implement research methodologies and approaches that value and recognise Indigenous knowledges and perspectives.

• HEPPP-WCE staff to record meetings and/or engage qualified interpreters to support communication in local language when, or wherever, deemed necessary.

Note: the examples provided above are indicative only. The HEPPP-WCE team acknowledges that additional communication and engagement practices will be used throughout the initiative.
Appendix 11 – Research and Evaluation Framework

Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP)
Whole of Community Engagement Initiative

Updated 29th June, 2016
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Background to the WCE Initiative

The WCE Initiative is working to inspire six remote communities in the Northern Territory (NT) to include higher education among their normal expectations. The Initiative is being led by the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor Indigenous Leadership and Charles Darwin University and is funded through the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme (HEPPP). The Initiative has employed community-based Indigenous researchers and staff who are guiding program implementation tailored to the local context of each community.

The objectives of the WCE Initiative are:

“Using whole-of-community engagement strategies, inspire six targeted remote and very remote Indigenous communities to include higher education among their normal expectations, by:

(a) Exploring current community perspectives of higher education, and linking with existing strategies for achieving quality of life aspirations

(b) Co-creating ongoing opportunities for community, research, academic and public policy leaders to engage in mutually beneficial and critical relationships

(c) Identifying means for making education relevant culturally and physically accessible with a view to establishing strong and sustainable educational pathways from early childhood to lifelong post-secondary education.”

- Signed variation of Conditions of Grant, p.1

Evaluating the WCE Initiative

We know that it is not possible to control real life circumstances and that things do not always happen in a linear way (in a straight line). We know that it is the many components of a higher education system that work together to best enable a person to participate and succeed in a higher education journey. Most importantly, we know that Indigenous communities will achieve their higher education aspirations when their own leaders have the information, resources and relationships that they need to pass down through generations. Developmental evaluation allows us to work in a way that is flexible and responsive to the needs of the communities in which we work. It also responds to complexity. Developmental evaluation places high value on systems, local knowledges and context; therefore this approach has been adopted.

The purpose of this framework is to:

1. guide evaluation of the WCE Initiative;
2. facilitate a common understanding of evaluation of the WCE Initiative within the WCE team; and
3. share this with key stakeholders, and facilitate opportunities for feedback and discussion, about evaluation of the WCE Initiative.

This framework has been informed by workshops, meetings, emails, phone calls, diagrams, metaphors, and literature. We have endeavoured to uphold the commitment to a both ways approach throughout this Initiative, including through the development of this framework. Both campus based and community
based WCE staff were consulted and their perspectives and ideas included in the development of this framework.

Having adopted developmental evaluation as our evaluation approach, our learning journey continues in an ongoing way. Evaluation processes are continually being shaped by collaborative discussion, and in a way that allows flexibility to meet the needs of each community. This framework is a ‘living document’ and will be revised further as the WCE Initiative proceeds.

**Data Sources**

The following sources of data were used to develop this framework:

- Key WCE Initiative documents e.g. funding application, Conditions of Grant (CoG), ethics approval documents
- Progress reports, field trip reports, and other documents
- The preceding Developmental Evaluation Questioning Framework (developed with campus based staff through ongoing discussions)
- A number of whole of team WCE workshops and meetings
- Steering Group meetings
- Individual and group discussions between evaluation support staff and the Program Manager, the Strategic Priority Projects Manager, community based and campus based staff
- The 2nd Evaluation Progress Summary
- WCE Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines
Timeline of WCE Evaluation-Related Events

- **JULY 2014**
  - First WCE Initiative staff member recruited (Program Manager)

- **OCT – NOV 2014**
  - Social Network Analysis (SNA) Consultant employed; SNA Workshop

- **FEBRUARY 2015**
  - Evaluation Manager employed 0.5FTE

- **MARCH 2015**
  - Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines disseminated

- **APRIL 2015**
  - 4th WCE team workshop (campus based and community based staff)

- **FEBRUARY 2016**
  - Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines disseminated

- **MARCH 2016**
  - 2nd Evaluation Report

- **SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2014**
  - Campus based staff employed:
    - Community Engagement Leaders
    - Mentor & Enrichment Officers
    - Community Teachers' Liaison Leader
    - Program Coordinator
    - Admin & Finance Support

- **JANUARY 2015 – ONGOING**
  - Community based staff employed:
    - Community Co-researchers
    - Community Research Leaders
    - Community Mentors
    - Education Team Leader
    - Education Engagement Facilitator
    - Cultural Advisors

- **JANUARY 2015**
  - 1st WCE team workshop (campus based staff)

- **FEBRUARY 2015**
  - Preceding Developmental Evaluation Questioning Framework developed

- **JUNE 2015**
  - 1st Evaluation Report (SNA only); 2nd WCE team workshop (campus based staff)

- **JULY 2015**
  - Evaluation Manager reduced capacity to 0.2FTE

- **AUGUST 2015**
  - Evaluation Coordinator employed 0.4FTE

- **SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2014**
  - Social Network Analysis (SNA) Consultant employed; SNA Workshop

- **NOVEMBER 2015**
  - Evaluation Coordinator 0.8FTE

- **DECEMBER 2015**
  - 3rd WCE team workshop (campus based and community based staff)
Whole of Community Engagement Initiative Appendices

WCE Research & Evaluation Framework - Overview

Community Level Evaluation

Initiative Evaluation

‘The cycle’/ongoing learning
What are we learning? What can be improved?

Final Evaluation
What did we learn? What changes were made?

WCE INITIATIVE RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Evaluation - PARTNERSHIPS
Evaluation - PROCESS
Evaluation - GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP
Evaluation - STRATEGIC PRIORITY PROJECTS & SYSTEMS CHANGE
Evaluation - OTHER ACTIVITIES

RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

A both ways\(^1\) approach

\(^1\)Refer to p.8 for explanation of WCE Initiative both ways approach.

PASSING WITH COMMUNITIES

SHARING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

PASSING WITH COMMUNITIES

SHARING WITH STAKEHOLDERS
Approach

WCE Evaluation Principles

- We want to do the best we can together.
- We want to respectfully share knowledge both ways.
- Everyone has equal say and can be honest. It’s okay to disagree.
- It’s okay to make mistakes – they are opportunities for positive change.
- Indigenous people know the most about their community and their culture.
- We must be transparent all the way across.

Figure 2: WCE Evaluation principles.

‘Research’ and ‘Evaluation’

For the purpose of clarity, the WCE team defined:

- **research** as ‘finding out about, and understanding, a topic’:
  - For example, ‘what are current community perspectives around higher education?; what are the enablers and barriers for Indigenous people living in remote communities participating and achieving in higher education? how can we work through these?’

- **evaluation** as ‘finding out about and understanding the value of an action’
  - For example, ‘how effectively are we working; what change has been made through our work?’

A ‘Both Ways’ Approach

The ‘both ways’ approach was developed and articulated by Yolngu educators through the use of a metaphor specific to East Arnhem land. The ‘Ganma’ metaphor describes:

> “the philosophy that allows us to open up to white society on common ground. Ganma tells about the place in Gumatj country where salt and fresh water meet and mix. It is a metaphor with many spiritual and symbolic meanings but at its base it is about a “common ground” understanding of the world. What we are trying to say to Balanda is “try to meet us halfway, try to meet us halfway here.” (Yunupingu cited Batchelor College, 1994, p.26)

It was important to community based staff that all processes relevant to their work in communities be conceptualised through a both ways approach. This includes concepts to be applied across all areas of the WCE Initiative Research and Evaluation Framework. Throughout the course of the Initiative many metaphors have been described by community based staff to explain, through a cultural lens, concepts relating to evaluation and research. Differing metaphors have been put forward by staff from different regions to describe the same concepts, which reflect the geographical, cultural and historical diversity of the areas in which we work. Examples of WCE Initiative both ways thinking relative to each part of the research and evaluation framework are presented on page 9.
“We need to think about evaluation in traditional ways so that it makes sense.”
- Valda Shannon, Tennant Creek

We are continually working to provide space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff members to combine both Indigenous and mainstream ways of thinking so that we can implement the most useful and meaningful evaluation ideas, processes, methods and tools. This process is occurring within the constraints of geographically distributed locations, significant cultural and linguistic diversity, available financial resources and time.

Both Ways Research and Evaluation Framework Concepts (to be developed further)

Social Network Analysis
Social Network Analysis (SNA) is the methodological study of social networks. A social network includes actors (e.g. people, groups, organisations) and the relationships between them. SNA was selected early in the Initiative as a process that could be useful in mapping the evolution of relationships with stakeholders in WCE communities. An SNA consultant is employed to provide leadership and research expertise for the use of SNA within the WCE Initiative. The consultant is a member of the ‘evaluation support staff’. How SNA is being used in each community varies. This will be reflected in Community Action Plans (CAPs), community level evaluation plans, and community level evaluation findings.
‘Types’ of WCE Developmental Evaluation

1. Evaluation for Ongoing Development

The WCE Initiative developmental evaluation approach involves regular and ongoing collection and analysis of data in order to inform further development of the Initiative (see Figure 3, p.10). For this to occur in the most effective way possible, it must be done in a collaborative and timely manner. Collaborative action reflection cycles support team learning and improvement, and the timeliness of sharing key learnings from these cycles is important to be able to respond in an appropriate way. These cycles are occurring at the community level and at the WCE Initiative level.

Evaluation data is analysed through the reflection process. We can make changes to our future plans based on what we learn.

2. Evaluation of WCE Processes, Impacts and Outcomes (Final Evaluation)

The final evaluation of the WCE Initiative will involve analysing WCE Initiative processes, and the changes that the WCE Initiative has contributed to (impact and outcomes). The evaluation process will seek to understand the significance of these changes, and the implications that these have for Indigenous education, community development, and potentially other, sectors. These processes are detailed within the Community Level Evaluation Framework (p.13), and the WCE Initiative Research and Evaluation Framework (p.15-21).

Figure 3: The ‘action-reflection’ cycle.
Diagram adapted from https://goodthingsltd.wordpress.com/
‘Levels’ of Evaluation

1. Community Level Evaluation

Evaluation findings from WCE communities underpin ongoing WCE Initiative directions. A Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines companion document was developed to guide evaluation at the community level in a way that enables collaborative learning and effective information sharing. The Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines sets out requirements for development of Community Action Plans and for evaluation of WCE work at the community level. The requirements for community level evaluation that are included in this document are listed in Figure 4 below.

1. **Community Action Plans (CAPs) must include:**
   
   a. **Indicators of change, including KPIs in the CoG and subsequent variations**
   
   b. **Evaluation methods and tools**
   
   c. **Plan for reflection process/cycle**
   
   d. **Expected outcomes**

2. **Requirements for sharing of key findings on a regular basis to Program Manager and evaluation support staff, who will assist in sharing with appropriate stakeholders**

3. **Timeframes for the above requirements**

Figure 4: WCE community level evaluation requirements.

2. Initiative Evaluation

Evaluation findings at the initiative level will include overall findings of our work at the community level, as well as other parts of the WCE Initiative that are not specific to one community. This is outlined in further detail on pages 14-22.
### WCE Initiative Team Roles in Research & Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Key Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **COMMUNITY BASED AND CAMPUS BASED STAFF** | • Plan, implement and record research and evaluation findings relating to community specific activities  
• Regularly discuss/share progress and findings of community specific research and evaluation, and determine dissemination processes, with Program Manager and Evaluation Coordinator |
| **PROGRAM MANAGER**                      | • Oversee all WCE Initiative evaluation processes  
• Monitor and provide guidance on community specific CAPs and evaluation activities  
• Ensure relevant evaluation findings are fed through to key stakeholders (with consent); and that relevant information is fed back to communities |
| **PROGRAM COORDINATOR**                  | • Support sharing of research and evaluation findings with key stakeholders through website and newsletter  
• Assist communication of WCE evaluation information to Evaluation Coordinator |
| **EVALUATION COORDINATOR**               | • Develop key evaluation documents to guide whole of initiative evaluation processes  
• Support team in community level evaluation planning, implementation and reporting where needed  
• Support monitoring of community specific CAPs and evaluation activities  
• Play a central role in collating, analysing and sharing whole of initiative evaluation information, and ensuring this is done in a collaborative way wherever possible |
| **SNA CONSULTANT**                       | • Oversee WCE Initiative SNA process  
• Support staff in implementation and utilisation of SNA data  
• Report on SNA findings in collaboration with relevant WCE staff |
| **STRATEGIC PRIORITY PROJECTS MANAGER**  | • Support sharing of research and evaluation information with key stakeholders; in collaboration with Program Manager and staff working in communities through implementation of Strategic Priority Projects |
| **COMMUNITY TEACHERS’ LIAISON LEADER**   | • Provide a critical voice to the research and evaluation process, utilising current literature in related fields |
| **ALL STAFF**                            | • Actively contribute to development of evaluation processes, protocols and documents  
• Regularly discuss ideas, issues, successes, challenges and plans with Evaluation Coordinator and/or Program Manager |

### Intellectual Property

We will respect the ownership of Indigenous knowledges and stories by negotiating issues of authorship, attribution and integrity. Within the WCE team we will make sure that any use of Indigenous knowledges and stories follow cultural protocols and laws, and uphold the moral rights of individuals and communities through adhering to the *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies* (AIATSIS, 2012). We are, however, legally bound by our agreement with the Commonwealth to provide access to WCE Initiative intellectual property material as per the CoG.
Community Level WCE Evaluation Framework
Key performance indicators within the CoG are listed in **red** font

## Community Level WCE Developmental Evaluation Framework

Note: The evaluation questions listed below will produce data that varies between communities due to the community-driven nature of the Initiative. The KPIs, methods and tools used to evaluate community level activities will be determined by community based and campus based staff working in each community, with the exception of the KPIs listed in the CoG.

### KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- To be determined by community based and campus based staff working in each community, as guided by requirements outlined in Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines
- Support available from evaluation support staff

### Key Performance Indicators

**Mentors in place in each community**

- Number of community activities; number of participants; % satisfaction
- Number of Elders and leaders activities; number of participants; % satisfaction
- Number of mentorship activities; number of participants; % satisfaction

**Community partnership agreements signed, with associated community baseline data reports**

**Community disposition towards tertiary education improved in each partner community** *(precise KPI to be determined)*

**Number of long term or recurring partnership activities (community level partnerships)**

**Community specific KPIs**

### Data collection

By community based and campus based WCE staff with support/coordination from evaluation support staff.

### How will this be evaluated?

- SNA – community specific processes for collection, analysis and use of data.
- Collaborative analysis process determined by community based and campus based WCE staff.

### How will findings be disseminated?

Evaluation information relating to the KPIs within the CoG will be provided to the Australian Government. However, broader dissemination of evaluation information to community stakeholders relating to these and other community specific KPIs will be determined by community based and campus based WCE staff working in each community. Relevant information will also be fed into the development and implementation of Strategic Priority Projects as it arises.
WCE Initiative
Research & Evaluation Framework
### Key Performance Indicators

**Number of long term or recurring partnership activities (NT or national partnerships)**

**No. Signed partnership agreements, service agreements or MoUs**

**Report published and circulated to the sector**

**Adherence to Steering Group Terms of Reference**

**Number and quality of collaborative partnership activities (Steering Group meeting attendance, facilitation and content; workshops; project activities)**

**Adherence to partnership agreements**

**Tangible change/action within/through work of partner organisations relevant to WCE objectives**

**Projects completed on time and with budget (RIEL/NAILSMA)**

### Data collection

By Program Manager, Program Coordinator, Strategic Priority Projects Manager, evaluation support staff.

### How will this be evaluated?

**As the Initiative proceeds:**

Evaluation support staff will facilitate:

1. Survey (mid 2016) for WCE campus based team members and follow up arising issues
2. Participatory evaluation activity or survey at June 2016 Steering Group meeting
3. Formal and informal interviews with Steering Group members and WCE team members

**Final evaluation:**

Evaluation support staff to implement/support/coordinate:

1. Analysis of Steering Group documentation (minutes, emails, other internal documents)
2. Formal and informal interviews with Steering Group members, WCE team members (campus based and community based) and other key stakeholders
3. Follow up survey/interviews for WCE team at end of 2016
4. Final evaluation survey/interviews for Steering Group members

### How will findings be disseminated?

1. Provision of final report to Australian Government
2. Report published and circulated to the sector (relevant partners and stakeholders)
WCE Initiative Evaluation - Process

**KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

- How did we obtain support in WCE communities for the Initiative? How effective was this process?
- What were the key factors that influenced the early stages of planning and why?
- How effective was the Community Action Plan (CAP) process?
- How effective was our teamwork, communication and engagement? What did this look like?
- How useful was SNA as a tool? In what ways?
- Did we achieve key milestones and other internal milestones?
- Did we work in an ethical way? What did our work look like compared to what we said we would do in our ethics application?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation approach and design?
- How effectively were the findings of our activities shared with others?

**Key Performance Indicators**

**Staff recruited**

**Operational Plan signed**

**6 communities identified and prioritised**

**Program funds fully acquitted**

**Report published and circulated to the sector**

**Adherence to Communication & Engagement Strategy**

**Milestones achieved**

**Staff retention & satisfaction**

**WCE community retention, satisfaction and level of knowledge about the Initiative**

**Ethics standards maintained**

**Level of contribution of SNA data to understanding about engagement processes**

**Evaluation support expectations fulfilled**

**Unrealistic evaluation expectations addressed**

**Dissemination of findings activities (number, type, feedback)**

**How will data be collected?**

To be coordinated by evaluation support staff. Data will be generated by all WCE Initiative staff through documentation of internal processes as the Initiative proceeds.

---

1. Refers to milestones within the CoG
2. Refers to deadlines set by the Program Manager
How will this be evaluated?

Thematic analysis of:

• Reflective interviews with campus-based staff and community based staff (prior to establishment of community level evaluation processes and at the end of the Initiative)
• Transcripts and notes from collaborative WCE workshops
• Steering Group meeting minutes and communication products
• SNA diagrams, combined with qualitative data relating to community level engagement processes
• Key Initiative documents
• Communication and engagement products (for example, WCE Communication & Engagement Strategy, conference presentations, publications, emails)
• Internal survey – what are your expectations and what support do you need?
• Field trip reports, progress reports, evaluation reports of discrete activities
• Where possible, data will be analysed in a collaborative manner. This is an extremely challenging task considering the WCE geographical distribution of remote staff locations and the level of cultural diversity that exists within the Initiative.

How will findings be disseminated?

1. To WCE team members in an ongoing and timely manner as the Initiative proceeds in order to motivate and shape further action (emails, workshops, evaluation summary reports, informal communication)
2. To WCE communities
3. In a final evaluation report to relevant sectors
4. Targeted stakeholder presentations
5. Conference presentations and journal articles
WCE Initiative Evaluation - Governance & Leadership

### KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- How effective was the design of the Initiative (development of Initiative aims and objectives, organisational structure, planning documents, stakeholder analysis, evaluation framework)?
- How effectively were WCE team processes and protocols managed (recruitment, team building, communication, risk management, conflict resolution)?
- How was implementation of the Initiative managed? How effective was this? What was done well? What could have been improved?
- How was the Steering Group function? Was it effective? How well did they achieve the functions and responsibilities in their terms of reference?
- How was the communication between the Steering Group, the WCE team, and key players in partner organisations? How regularly did they communicate?
- Were individual and organisational relationships of Steering Group representatives strengthened? In what way? If not, why not?
- How was the honesty and trust between the Steering Group, the WCE team and key players in partner organisations?
- How effective was WCE community representation on the Steering Group? What impacts did it have on Steering Group function and WCE implementation?

### Key Performance Indicators

Requirements within Community Level Planning and Evaluation Guidelines followed

- Strategic documents produced – number/type/timeliness
- Data management protocols
- Staff retention and satisfaction
- Adherence to Steering Group terms of reference
- No. Steering Group meetings
- Number/type/feedback provided about documents provided to Steering Group
- Steering Group perceptions of WCE Initiative implementation, activities, and processes (qualitative)
- Perceptions of community representation on Steering Group (qualitative)
- Perceptions of respect, trust and honesty
- Satisfaction with Steering Group meeting facilitation

Data collection

By evaluation support staff.

How will this be evaluated?

Thematic analysis of:
- Reflective interviews with campus-based staff and community based staff (prior to establishment of community level evaluation processes and at the end of the Initiative)
- Transcripts and notes from collaborative WCE workshops
- Steering Group interviews, meeting minutes and communication products
- Key Initiative documents
- Field trip reports, progress reports, evaluation reports
How will findings be disseminated?

1. To WCE team members (including Program Manager) and Steering Group in an ongoing and timely manner as the Initiative proceeds in order to motivate and shape further action (emails, workshops, evaluation summary reports, informal communication)
2. In a final evaluation report to relevant sectors
3. Targeted stakeholder presentations

WCE Initiative Evaluation - Strategic Priority Projects

**KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS**
To be defined

**Key Performance Indicators**
To be defined

**Data collection**
By Strategic Priority Projects Manager, with support from Evaluation Coordinator.

**How will this be evaluated?**
To be defined

**How will findings be disseminated?**
- In a final report provided to the Australian Government
- Targeted stakeholder presentations
- Further dissemination processes to be defined
WCE Initiative Evaluation – Other Activity

* The information in this table will be developed further in the coming months.

This table refers to activity such as:

- Systems level change that does not fit directly into Strategic Priority Projects
- Development and support of Research Us
- ‘One-off’ activities, e.g. Remote Indigenous Research Forum (RIRF)
- Contribution to Indigenous employment statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How was the need for this activity determined?</td>
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<td>• How effectively did we support/implement this activity?</td>
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<td>• How did this activity support WCE objectives at community/strategic levels?</td>
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<td>• What were the impacts of this activity?</td>
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<th>Key Performance Indicators</th>
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<td>Specific indicators relevant to activity</td>
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<td>Achievement of WCE objectives relevant to activity</td>
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<th>Data collection</th>
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<td>By relevant WCE staff.</td>
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<th>How will this be evaluated?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis process determined by relevant WCE staff.</td>
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<tr>
<th>How will findings be disseminated?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Evaluation information relating to the KPIs within the CoG will be disseminated through acquittal of funds to Australian Government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dissemination of evaluation information relating to these and other specific KPIs will be determined by relevant WCE staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relevant information will be fed into Strategic Priority Projects as it arises.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Across all WCE Initiative communities:

- What are community perspectives of higher education?
- How can community, research, academic and government leaders engage in relationships that benefit education interests of all?
- Have these relationships been developed? How do we know these relationships will be sustained?
- What are the ways to make education relevant and culturally and physically accessible?

*Note: Key evaluation questions to investigate impacts/outcomes of strategies based on community level research findings are included in Community Level WCE Evaluation Framework*

## Data collection

By community based and campus based WCE staff, with support/coordination of evaluation support staff.

## How will this data be analysed?

**Within WCE communities**

Collaborative analysis process determined by community based and campus based WCE staff.

**Across whole of Initiative**

Collaborative thematic analysis (where possible) of findings.

## How will findings be disseminated?

Dissemination of research findings will be determined by community based and campus based staff working in each community, and in ways determined through whole of team discussion.
Reporting & Information Dissemination

It is to be noted that information dissemination is an area that will require further discussion as a team. A dissemination strategy will be produced later in 2016.

Community based and campus based WCE staff are responsible for reporting on, and dissemination of, community level WCE project and evaluation findings to relevant stakeholders in each community. The reporting process must adhere to the requirements listed in the WCE Community Level Action Planning and Evaluation Guidelines and this framework. That is, there will be ongoing cycles of action, reflection and sharing of learnings, in addition to development of a final community specific evaluation ‘product’. Final community evaluation products must include:

1. information about the KPIs listed in the WCE Community Level Action Planning and Evaluation Guidelines; and
2. information regarding community specific KPIs determined to be appropriate by staff working in each community.

This final evaluation product could be a document, a PowerPoint or other presentation, or a video, and could include artwork, diagrams, photos, voice recordings, or any other tool that helps us to record, share and collate our findings. The format of evaluation products produced will be determined with guidance from community based staff and other WCE community members.

Evaluation support staff will coordinate final WCE Initiative reporting, with input from other staff. Final data analysis processes will include development of key evaluation findings and research themes, and discussion of these as a WCE group.

Analysis, reporting and information dissemination processes will be developed further and updated in this document as the Initiative proceeds.

Ongoing Learning

True to the spirit of developmental evaluation, evaluation processes will continue to evolve and be refined throughout the course of the Initiative. Please speak with James or Cat if you have comments or feedback regarding this document or evaluation processes.
References


Appendix 12 – Social Network Analysis Report 3 (final) - June 2016

Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP)
Whole of Community Engagement Initiative

Dr Gretchen Ennis
Lecturer & Researcher
Social Work & Community Studies
School of Health
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Introduction

This report is the third and final for the social network analysis (SNA) aspect of the evaluation of the Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) program. It contains four new community engagement diagrams that represent contacts between the WCE Campus-based teams and the communities of Maningrida, Gunbalanya, Yirrkala and Galiwin’ku in the Northern Territory between August 2015 and March 2016. These new diagrams are compared with diagrams from the previous two reports which document engagement from November 2014 to July 2015. The network diagrams and analysis demonstrate changing and consolidating patterns of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders and partners in each of the communities.

There is no ‘round three’ of SNA for the engagement of WCE campus based staff in Tennant Creek, as staff in that area decided to use the existing two rounds of SNA to further break down sectors of engagement. An overview of this is provided in the report.

As documented in the two previous reports, the SNA adopted for the Yuendumu part of the program is also different. Warlpiri leadership and employment networks have been explored in that community, as these are intertwined with education issues. An overview of the SNA work completed there is also provided.

The final section of the report provides some reflections on the process of using SNA in the context of the WCE project, and provides some recommendations for future SNA in this area.

A Brief Overview of Social Network Analysis

As outlined in previous reports (1 and 2), Social Network Analysis (SNA) involves the methodical study of social networks. A social network is a set of social actors (e.g. people, groups, organisations) and the ties (relationships) between them. Networks can be visualised using a social network diagram or graph.

SNA is a way of examining the structure of entities, e.g. an organisation, coalition, group, community. SNA can involve an examination and exploration of whole networks and/or ego-networks. Whole networks involve the study of an entire set of actors with a clear boundary, such as every student in a classroom, or every attendee at an event. Ego-networks are generated from the point of a specific actor or set of actors (ego) and the relationships that stem from that actor (alters). For example, a health organisation (ego and the organisations they refer patients to (alters), or a person (ego) and the people in their professional network (alters).

Because WCE is interested in understanding community structures, and engaging with appropriate networks to facilitate pathways to higher education, a purposeful study of the networks that WCE workers are utilising and developing could be useful for the project for practice, and for evaluation.
How SNA is Being Used in the Project

The approach to SNA used in this project was developed by members of the campus-based WCE team over a three day SNA workshop held in October 2014. This occurred several months prior to recruitment of community-based staff and was initially designed to map the networks that were developing at the beginning of the initiative. As a result of this, current SNA data reflects engagement between campus-based WCE staff and community-based stakeholders (including community-based WCE staff) only. It does not provide insight into the relationships that are developed and maintained by community-based staff with other community-based stakeholders. There is ongoing discussion within the WCE team regarding if/how SNA will be used in this way.

Because the program involved engagement with six Northern Territory (NT) communities, it was decided that there would be one type of SNA that would be used with all but one (Yuendumu) of the six communities. This was called a ‘WCE community engagement network’. As discussed in Report One, the campus-based WCE worker for Yuendumu had decades long, well established networks in the Yuendumu, it was decided that this type of engagement network was not suitable to that context.

The WCE Campus-based and Tennant Creek team decided not have a ‘round 3’ of the engagement network as they preferred to spend time exploring the process and value of further breaking down the existing diagrams in specific sector areas. This process is explained later in the report.

For ease of understanding the analysis is categorized as follows:

- WCE community engagement networks (one for each community of Maningrida, Gunbalanya, Galiwin’ku and Yirrkala)
- Community specific networks (developed as per the needs of the programs in Yuendumu and Tennant Creek.)

WCE Community Engagement Networks

Network analysis involves two key elements:

- A defined set of actors (dots)
- A defined relationship between the actors (lines)

In the WCE community engagement network, there are three types of actors; organisations, groups and individuals. The three types are marked with different colours so their type is clear.

The relationships depicted in these diagrams represent ‘contact associated with campus-based WCE staff’. The data was collected by WCE campus-based staff only. ‘Contact’ refers to a meeting, discussion, phone call or skype call that contains an exchange of information about the WCE program and its activities, where campus-based staff was involved. It does not include highly informal communication such as bumping into someone at the shop and only saying ‘hi’, or a phone call or text to arrange a meeting. While we recognise that these informal interactions are important, it is very difficult to document each of them accurately.
The diagrams and analyses provide an understanding of the networks being developed and utilised by the WCE campus-based staff in the communities they are working with. These diagrams show who the campus-based staff has met with, the organisations people are affiliated with and the way organisations might be connected to one another through having common actors.

Data Collection & Analysis

Data for these diagrams comes from the field reports of WCE campus-based staff, for which all meetings (and attendances) have been recorded. Information about who participated in meetings, the organization(s) that person/people were representing (if any) and dates are entered into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets (a template has been developed for this purpose - see attached). This information was then organized by the author, and imported into ‘Gephi’ SNA software for development of diagrams and analysis.

The WCE community engagement networks data was to be gathered across five of the six communities participating in the WCE program at three points in time:

- Mid November 2014 (to demonstrate initial engagement)
- End of July 2015 (mid-life of project)
- End of March 2016 (toward the final stages of the project)

As explained above, only four of the six sites collected all three rounds of data. The three rounds of data that have been collected have been used to create networks of the development and maintenance of program linkages between the WCE campus-based team and the people, groups and organisations that make up the communities involved in the projects.

Analysis of November 2014, July 2015 and March 2016 Diagrams

Diagrams for Maningrida, Gunbalanya, Yirrkala and Galiwinku were generated at three points in time.

1. Mid November 2014 - from data collected after the initial engagement visits to community. They therefore represent the early engagement linkages from the first two months of the program.
2. End of July 2015 – from data collected from mid November 2014 to 31 July, 2015. This represents nine months’ worth of engagement.
3. End of March 2016 – from data collected from 1 August 2015 to 31 March, 2016. This represents a further eight months of engagement.

For the Maningrida and Gunbalanya communities, there is also a ‘combination’ diagram which shows all the engagement, from all three rounds of data collection, combined together. Unfortunately, due to data collection and timing issues, combined diagrams could not be generated with the Yirrkala and Gunbalanya community data at this point in time.

The types of networks generated by this data are ego-networks, generated from the perspective of one person or group, ‘ego’, and provide information about the relationships generated by ego (Crossely et. al., 2015). In the diagrams presented here the WCE campus-based staff is ‘ego’.

The diagrams were developed using a Yifan Hu algorithm. This is a standard algorithm that gathers nodes into groups based on their ties, then applies a force-based logic to the groups (Chervin, 2013; 2015).
‘Force-based’ simply means that strongly connected nodes attract each other, and less-connected ones repel each other.

A basic analysis of a network involves a consideration of its size, the number of nodes of various types, the number of ties, the distribution of ties among nodes (Scott, 2000). These aspects are considered in the presentation of the diagrams. SNA will provide an overview of the structure of relationships, but can tell us nothing about the quality or content of relationships. Other methods are needed to explore these critical elements.

Some useful information for interpreting the diagrams is included below:

- Blue dots are organisations
- Orange dots are individual people
- Green dots are groups of people.
- The lines between the WCE campus-based staff (blue center dot) and other organisations (blue dots) carry information about the number of contacts between WCE campus-based staff and the organization they are engaging with.
- The lines between the organisations (blue dots) and the people (orange dots) or groups (green dots) who are affiliated with that organization, carry information about the number of times that specific person or group was interacted with.
- For example, WCE campus-based staff may have had 10 contacts with one organisation, but nine of them could have been with one person only. It is important to know this information so that ‘key actors’ can be identified, as they are critical to the network structure.
- Organisations are named in the diagrams, but people are anonymized and numerically coded.
Engagement Network Diagrams at three points in time

1. Maningrida.

1.1 Maningrida Engagement Network - November 2014

Features of Maningrida engagement network as at November 2014

Number organisations engaged with (blue): 6
Number of people engaged with (orange): 10
Number of contacts with organisations in Maningrida: 15

Points of Interest:

- WCE campus-based staff met with the IEO (actor 9) more than any other individual (five times)
- The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is the most met with organisation (five times)
- Bachelor Institute is the least met with organisation (once).
- There is little overlap in terms of people being represented in more than one organisation.
1.2 Maningrida Engagement Network Nov 2014 to July 2015

Features of Maningrida engagement network between Nov 2014 and July 2015

Number of organisations engaged with: 9
Number of individuals engaged with: 40
Number of contacts with organisations in Maningrida: 63

Points of interest

- Engagement with 3 Traditional Owners (TO) via six contacts, and 11 contacts with 12 unaffiliated community members (CM).
- The tie between WCE campus-based staff and CEC is very strong (17 contacts).
- The average number of contacts WCE campus-based staff has had with organisations (not including CM’s and TO’s) in Maningrida is five.
1.3 Maningrida Engagement Network from August 2015 to March 2016

Features of Maningrida engagement network between August 2015 and March 2016

Number of organisations engaged with: 34
Number of individuals engaged with: 126
Number of groups (green dots) engaged with: 7 (comprising 272 people)
Number of contacts with organisations in Maningrida: 198

Points of interest

- There are 40 individuals and two groups associated with Maningrida school.
- One person from Maningrida School was met with 18 times from August to March (node 18).
1.4 Maningrida Engagement Network: All data combined (Nov 2014 to March 2016)

The following diagram combines all three rounds of network data into one diagram. It shows all engagement from November 2014 to March 2016.

Features of Maningrida engagement network between November 2014 to March 2016

Number of organisations engaged with: 38
Number of individuals engaged with: 147
Number of groups (green dots) engaged with: 7 (comprising 272 people)
2. Gunbalanya

2.1 Gunbalanya Engagement Network – November 2014

Features of Gunbalanya engagement network as at November 2014

Number organisations engaged with (blue): 8

Number of people engaged with (orange): 22

Number of contacts with organisations in Gunbalanya: 26

Points of interest:

• The Child and Family Centre is the most met with with organisation (seven interactions)
• The IEO (actor 10) is the most met with individual (five interactions)
• The Clontarf Program and Batchelor Institute are the least met with organisations (once each)
• There is variation in the number of engagements with organisations (from one to seven interactions)
• There is no overlap in terms of people being represented in more than one organisation
2.2 Gunbalanya Engagement Network - Nov 2014 to July 2015

Features of Gunbalanya engagement network between Nov 2014 and July 2015

Number of organisations engaged with: 14
Number of individuals engaged with: 37
Number of contacts with organisations in Gunbalanya: 35

Points of interest

- WCE campus-based staff met with seven community members (non-affiliated).
- WARC and GCS were the most ‘met with’ organisations (six times each).
- The average number of contacts WCE campus-based staff had with organisations in Gunbalanya between November and July was is 2.5.
2.3 Gunbalanya Engagement Network - August 2015 to March 2016

Features of Gunbalanya engagement network between August 2015 and March 2016

Number of organisations engaged with: 22
Number of individuals engaged with: 61
Number of contacts with organisations in Gunbalanya: 71

Points of interest

- Organizations WARC and LAB have multiple individuals in common.
- Person 127 is connected to three organisations
- The most frequently met with individual is node 12 from the CFC (six times).
2.4 Gunbalanya Engagement Network: All data combined (Nov 2014 to March 2016)

The following diagram combines all three rounds of network data into one diagram. It shows all engagement from November 2014 to March 2016.

Features of Gunbalanya engagement network between November 2014 to March 2016

Total number of organisations engaged with: 28
Total number of individuals engaged with: 103
3. Yirrkala

3.1 Yirrkala Engagement Network – November 2014

Features of Yirrkala engagement network as at November 2014

Number organisations engaged with (blue): 10
Number of people engaged with (orange): 12
Number of contacts with organisations in Yirrkala: 13

Points of Interest:
- Yirrkala School is the most met with organisation (three times)
- There is an even distribution of engagement with other organisations (all but three were met with once) and people (all individuals were met with once)
- There are three individuals (actors 15, 18 and 14) who represent more than one organisation
3.2 Yirrkala Engagement Network – Nov 2014 to July 2015

Features of Yirrkala engagement network between Nov 2014 and July 2015

Number of organisations engaged with:  28 (including WCE Galiwink’u and Yirrkala)
Number of individuals engaged with:  57
Number of contacts with organisations in Yirrkala: 177

Points of interest

- WCE staff met with 18 community members (non-affiliated).
- Yirrkala CEC and WCE-Y were the most met with organisations
- The average number of contacts WCE campus-based staff had with organisations in Yirrkala between November and July is six (6.3)
3.3 Yirrkala Engagement Network – August 2015 to March 2016

The final Yirrkala engagement network was based on data collected by a different person to the first two rounds. This resulted in some differences in collection and interpretation which means the following diagram should be viewed as a ‘network sketch’ rather than a systemic network analysis.

Features of Yirrkala engagement network between August 2015 and March 2016

Number of organisations engaged with: 17
Number of individuals engaged with: 31
Number of groups engaged with: 3
Number of contacts with organisations in Yirrkala: 101

Points of interest

- Yirrkala School (Y-CEC) is the most frequently met with organization (45 times)
- The individual coded number 13 is the most frequently met with person, followed by others from the same school (Y-CEC).
4. Galiwin’ku

4.1 Galiwin’ku Engagement Network – November 2015

Features of Galiwin’ku engagement network as at November 2014

- Number of organisations engaged with (blue): 8
- Number of people engaged with (orange): 16
- Number of contacts WCE has had with organisations in Galiwin’ku: 17

Points of Interest:

- Shepherdson School Council, Shepherdson College, the Community Advisory Board and East Arnhem Regional Council are the most met-with organisations (3 meetings with each of these organisations).
- Actor 11 from the Community Advisory Board is the most met with individual
- There is an even distribution of engagement; other than Actor 11 and Actor 18, all other individuals were met with once
- Actor 12 is highly connected, being affiliated with three organisations
- There are two actors (12 and 26) who are affiliated with more than one organisation.
4.2 Galiwin’ku Engagement Network – Nov 2014 to July 2015

Features of Galiwin’ku engagement network between Nov 2014 and July 2015

Number of organisations engaged with: 20

Number of individuals engaged with: 64

Number of contacts with organisations in Yirrkala: 85

Points of interest

- WCE campus-based staff met with 17 community members (non-affiliated)
- Yalu, WCE-G, and SC were the most ‘met with’ organisations
- The average number of contacts WCE campus-based staff had with organisations in Galiwin’ku between November and July is four (4.24)
4.3 Galiwin’ku Engagement Network – August 2015 to March 2016

This final Galiwin’ku engagement network was based on data collected by a different person to the first two rounds. This resulted in some differences in collection and interpretation which means the following diagram should be viewed as a ‘network sketch’ rather than a systemic network analysis.

---

Features of Galiwin’ku engagement network between August 2015 and March 2016

Number of organisations engaged with: 14

Number of individuals engaged with: 50

Number of groups engaged with: 2 (includes over 30 people)

Number of contacts with organisations in Galiwin’ku: 212

Points of interest

- The link between WCE and Yalu’ is very strong (105 meetings), indicating a close working relationship
- The links between community members (non-affiliated) and with Shepherdson College are also strong, with 19 and 16 meetings respectively.
**Comparing the three sets of data**

The first three tables show engagement with individuals and organisations at three points in time. The final table is a cumulative total of all individuals and organisations who were engaged with from November 2014 through to March 2016.

**Time 1: Engagement in all four communities at November 2014.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maningrida</th>
<th>Gunbalanya</th>
<th>Yirrkala</th>
<th>Galiwin'ku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of organisations engaged with</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of individuals</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Time 2: Engagement in all four communities between November 2014 and July 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maningrida</th>
<th>Gunbalanya</th>
<th>Yirrkala</th>
<th>Galiwin'ku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of organisations engaged with</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(including WCE-Y and WCE-G)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of individuals</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Time 3: Engagement in all four communities between August 2015 and March 2016.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maningrida</th>
<th>Gunbalanya</th>
<th>Yirrkala</th>
<th>Galiwin'ku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of organisations engaged with</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td><strong>Number of individuals</strong></td>
<td>126</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>268</td>
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</table>

**Cumulative engagement in all four communities from November 2014 to March 2016.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maningrida</th>
<th>Gunbalanya</th>
<th>Yirrkala</th>
<th>Galiwin'ku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of organisations engaged with</strong></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Number of individuals</strong></td>
<td>151</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>441</td>
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</table>
Community specific SNA projects.

Since the beginning of the SNA data collection and development of diagrams, there have been a number of community specific network mapping ideas generated by the WCE teams. Early ideas were documented in the first SNA report; however only two sets of additional diagrams have been developed. These are for the community of Yuendumu and the town of Tennant Creek.

There were initially three sets of SNA proposed for Yuendumu. One of these, ‘Follow the Leader’ (see report one) was attempted; however it became obvious that attempting to document the daily interactions of Warlpiri leaders with others was very difficult due to the high frequency of contacts and the multiplexity of relationships. In the following section, the Yuendumu Board of Directors’ Network, and associated employment data are presented. This analysis is very different to that presented with the other four communities, therefore particular approach is explained below.

The Tennant Creek SNA began in the same way as the other four communities, however, it was decided by the community and campus-based WCE teams that they would not collect a third round of data for SNA. Instead they requested that the existing diagram from round two be further analysed in more detail so that it might be used more strategically within the project work. Therefore, a range of diagrams, using the same analysis method as the previous four sets of community engagement diagrams, was generated. This is explained further in the Tennant Creek Section later in this section of the report.
1. Yuendumu Board of Directors Network.

Aim

The aim of this SNA process was to analyse patterns of the formal representation of Warlpiri leaders through their appointed positions on varying Boards, including roles and responsibilities, and their functions at both board and operational level.

Classifications

Actors: All identified local organisations in Yuendumu with governing bodies and their board/committee members.

Relation: Board affiliation (board member belonging to board.)

Data Collection

Lisa Watts (WCE Community Engagement Leader – campus-based staff member) collected list of board/committee members for each organisation using publicly available information, and visits to organisations in Yuendumu. Data was organised in Excel and entered in Gephi SNA software. The list of boards is included below.

Data Analysis

A Yifan Hu network representation was used to create the following diagram. Green dots are organisations and the red dots are their board members. The diagrams created can be considered ‘whole networks’. That is, they are an attempt to gather and represent information about all the boards or committees in Yuendumu and all their members.

The size of each organisation (green) node is proportional its degree (the number of ties it has). Blue nodes are vacant board positions.

1.1 Yuendumu Boards as at June 2015 – Table of Organizations

We have used the term ‘boards’ to describe the unpaid governing body of a not-for-profit organisation. By a ‘board’ we are referring to all committees, boards, reference groups and councils that are responsible for the governance of organisations that operate in Yuendumu. Some more formal definitions of each of the types of governing bodies included are:

- A ‘Board’ is the governing body of an Indigenous controlled organization that is registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (Australian Government).
- A ‘committee’ is the governing body that is legally responsible for an incorporated association.
- A ‘reference group’ is an informal group that has no specific governing powers but who provides guidance and information to a specific service.
- A ‘local authority board’ is the local arm of the council shire (in this case the Central Desert Shire)
- A ‘school council’ is the governing body of the local school.

Through accessing information publicly available information (Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations) and visiting organisations in Yuendumu, we compiled the following list of 16 ‘boards’ and their 125 members.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governing Body</th>
<th>Type of Entity</th>
<th>Other information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warlpiri Media Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td>Trading as Paw Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC)</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuendumu Women's Centre Aboriginal Corporation (YWCAC)</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlukurlangu Artists Aboriginal Association</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt Church Yuendumu Indigenous Corporation</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuendumu Magpies Football Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Living Water United Pentecostal Church Yuendumu Indigenous Corporation</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mampu Maninja-Kurlangu Jarlu Patu-Ku Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td>Trading as Yuendumu Old People's Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlpiri Education Board Incorporated (WEB)</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuendumu Health Advisory Committee (YHAC)</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>Local arm of WYN Health Service Aboriginal Corp (Board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuendumu Mediation &amp; Justice Committee</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>Program of the Central Desert Shire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuendumu Social Club</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>Big Store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Tanami Indigenous Protected Areas Yuendumu Mgt. Region Committee (STIPA)</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>Sits within Yuendumu Regional Office of CLC and includes Rangers Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuendumu School Council</td>
<td>School Council</td>
<td>NT Dept. of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Authority Board of Central Desert Regional Shire</td>
<td>Local Authority Board</td>
<td>RJCP is looked after by this board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child &amp; Family Centre</td>
<td>Reference group</td>
<td>Program of the Yuendumu School (Early Childhood Reference Group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walpíri Education Training &amp; Trust (WETT)*</td>
<td>Committee</td>
<td>Sits within Yuendumu Regional office of CLC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2 Yuendumu Boards as at June 2015 – Network Diagram

Features of the Yuendumu Board Diagram

- Size of network (people, boards) = 16 boards, 125 people
- Number of Indigenous people = 118
- Average number of boards a person is connected to = 1.624
- Board with least members – Living Water (3)
- Board with most members = WYDAC (25)
- Most number of boards an individual is on = 7 (node 18)
1.3 People on three or more Yuendumu Boards

The next diagram is a representation of the same data, however all nodes with less than three connections have been removed. This then depicts connections of individuals who sit on three or more boards.

The blue circles are individual people. The pink circles are the boards.

Features of the Yuendumu SNA diagram of people who are on three or more boards

- 19 people on 3 or more boards (all Warlpiri people)
- 5 people on 5 or more boards
2. Employment of Warlpiri People in Board-Run Organisations in Yuendumu.

As a companion piece to the Yuendumu board membership network, the following Yuendumu Board-Run organizations’ employment data was collected from all of the organisations included in the previously presented diagrams. This analysis is important as it demonstrates a discrepancy between board membership of local organisations, and employment in those same organisations.

Employment data was gathered during the first part of 2016, from each of the organisations included in the Board Membership analysis. Positions were ranked (by Lisa Watts in consultation with community members) according to their skill, qualification and responsibility levels as follows:

Level A: Senior Management /Executive Positions (eg. executive officer)

Level B: Middle Management/Tertiary Qualified (eg. school teacher, nurse)

Level C: ‘Worker’ Front line/Non-Tertiary qualified (eg. teaching assistant, administration, support worker)

![Employment categories across all Board-Run Yuendumu Organisations](chart)

Of the 22 senior management positions in Yuendumu organisations controlled by Aboriginal boards, no positions are held by Warlpiri people. There are 11 middle management positions held by Warlpiri people, compared with 49 held by non-Warlpiri people. The lowest level positions are overwhelmingly held by Warlpiri people, with almost 120 Warlpiri people employed in these positions, compare to less than 10 non-Warlpiri people.

This analysis demonstrates, along with the Yuendumu Boards SNA, demonstrates that despite the responsibility and volunteer hour’s associates with board membership of their local organisations, Warlpiri people are far more often employed at lower levels, in less skilled and less qualified jobs, than others. Higher education is critical in moving Warlpiri people into higher level employment.
3. Tennant Creek Engagement Networks

The SNA used in the Tennant Creek part of the WCE program began in a similar way as the other four engagement networks presented earlier in this report. However, after the second round of diagrams were generated, the WCE Campus-based and Tennant Creek-based teams decided they would prefer to ‘break down’ the diagram into sectors, to allow for a different type of analysis.

The first two diagrams presented below are engagement diagrams. Following on from these are the set of ‘sector diagrams’ that were requested by the team.

3.1 Tennant Creek Engagement at November 2014

Features of the Tennant Creek engagement network as at November 2014

Number organisations engaged with (blue): 5
Number of people engaged with (orange): 9
Number of contacts WCE has had with organisations in Tennant Creek: 7

Points of Interest:

• There is an even distribution of WCE campus-based staff engagement, with every individual met once, and every organisation, with the exception of Barkley Shire council (twice), met with once
• There is no overlap in terms of people being represented in more than one organization
3.2 Tennant Creek Engagement from Nov 2014 to July 2015
Abbreviations

Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal: AHA
Aboriginal Hostels Limited AHL
Aboriginal Interpreter Service AIS
Batchelor Institute: BI
Batchelor Institute – Tennant Creek: BI-TC
Barkly Region Alcohol & Drug Abuse Advisory Group Inc: BRADAAG
Barkly Regional Council: BRC
Catholic Care: CC
CDU - Tennant Creek Campus: CDU-TC
Central Land Council: CLC
Community Member: CM
Indigenous Affairs Network: IAN
Julalikari Aboriginal Corporation: JAC
NAILSMA NAILSMA
National Disability Insurance Agency: NDIA
Northern Land Council: NLC
Nyinkka Nyunyu Aboriginal Art & Culture Centre: NNAACC
Night Patrol: NP
Papulu Appar-Kari Aboriginal Corp.: PAAC
Patta Group: PG
RJCP RJCP
Remote School Attendance Strategy: RSAS
Tennant Creek High School: TCHS
Tennant Creek Primary School: TCPS
Tennant Creek Women’s Refuge: TCWR
Tennant Creek Youth Advisory Group: TCYAG
Training NT (Dept. of Business): TNT
University of NSW: UNSW
WCE Tennant Creek: WCE-TC

Features of Tennant Creek Engagement network between Nov 2014 and July 2015

Number of organisations engaged with: 28 (including WCE TC)
Number of individuals engaged with: 48
Number of contacts with organisations in Tennant Creek: 81 (not including CM’S)

Points of interest

• WCE campus-based staff met with 4 community members (nonaffiliated)
• JAC and AHA were the most met with organisations
• The average number of contacts WCE campus-based staff had with organisations in Tennant Creek between November and July is three (2.89).
3.3 Break-down of Tennant Creek SNA into sectors

The high number of people and organisations involved in Tennant Creek engagement with WCE is evident from the very ‘busy’ diagram. This diagram proved difficult to interpret meaningfully for the Tennant Creek WCE workers. They suggested that we work together to break down the diagrams into useful sectors. These were: Aboriginal corporations, education and research organisations, government bodies (local, NT and Federal), and non-government organisations and community members. Each of these sector diagrams are presented below, and they provide a much clearer representation of fairly even engagement across each sector.

The diagrams are currently being used by the WCE Tennant Creek based staff to plan engagement strategically. For example, the diagrams were used identify that the team wanted more engagement with business and social entrepreneurs to assist them in creating relevant education pathways, as they were not represented in any sector.

In the following Tennant Creek sector diagrams, individual people are red dots, and organisations are green dots.

3.3.1 Aboriginal Corporations
3.3.2 Education and Research Organisations
3.3.3 Government Bodies
3.3.4 Non-Government Organisations and Community Members
Reflections on the SNA process and ideas for similar projects

In this final section of the report, I reflect on 18 months of network data collection and analysis that has occurred across the six sites of the WCE program. A consideration of the processes involved and the strengths and weaknesses of this research is provided, along with recommendations for undertaking similar research into the future.

Collaborative development of the SNA design

From the outset, the design of the SNA was to be a collaborative one, formulated by the team as whole. A brief introduction of the methodology was provided at a campus-based team meeting in September 2014 to ascertain team interest in the method. In November 2014, a three day workshop for the WCE Campus-based teams was delivered. During this workshop a theoretical overview of SNA and training in the use of the SNA software ‘Gephi’ was provided. The idea behind this was to ensure that all team members had a basic understanding of what SNA is, and how they could use it in their work with communities. Most team members attended this meetings, however one could not attend, and some could only attend for parts of the training.

The workshop also involved a half-day brainstorm session about what type of SNA would work best for this project. During this session a design that would capture the structure of WCE Campus-based workers engagement in the communities they worked with, was developed and agreed upon. The analysis presented in this report directly reflects that design.

Working collaboratively to develop a method that would work across all six communities was challenging, but rewarding. The challenges were mostly due to different views about what engagement might mean in each location, what the purpose of the engagement was, and the different relationships already developed between workers and communities. At this early stage, one worker decided not to participate in the research designed for all six communities, but rather to work with the SNA advisor (myself) to develop a design more relevant to their relationship with the community of Yuendumu. That different analysis, and the rationale behind it, is also directly reflected in this report.

In summary the development of appropriate, SNA designs took time, but worked well. The design used for five of the six communities demonstrates the structure of engagement, and the Yuendumu specific design provides information about board affiliations. The development of SNA designs could have been improved if all staff members had been able to attend all of the training.

Conceptual clarity and consistency in data collection

Defining key concepts and terms is critical in any research. In the case of SNA, the definitions of categories such as ‘individual’, ‘organisation’, and later, ‘group’, were collaboratively developed. Understandings what engagement meant, and more specifically what a ‘contact’ between Campus-based staff and community organisations were also developed collaboratively. While these ideas were clarified at the outset, the collection of data ‘in the field’ is not always as clear cut. There was variation in what people considered a ‘meaningful’ contact between WCE team members. There were also issues in clarity about who worked for what organization, as at times people worked for multiple organisations simultaneously.

Data for the SNA comes from WCE Campus-bases staff field reports. All meetings and meaningful contacts were meant to be recorded in these reports and then put into a ‘contacts’ template. It is at this point
of recording contacts that issues occur, as different people record their contacts in different ways, some with far more detail than others.

These issues are very difficult to completely resolve, as individuals will have different understanding of even tightly defined ideas. The only way to resolve this would be to have one person present when all data is collected and transferring into the templates in order to ensure consistency in categorization. When working across multiple sites, this proves difficult.

Another idea, which was not used in this project, is to use a web-based calendar/meeting system (such as Outlook), in which all meetings and meaningful contacts are recorded. This data could them be downloaded for analysis.

**Turnover of staff**

The change of some Campus-based staff members has been a challenge for the SNA data collection process. From the early stages of the SNA process, it appears that within each of the three teams of two workers, an informal allocation of an ‘SNA person’ occurred. This seemed like a good use of time at that point, however over the life of project it has created some difficulty. Staff turnover meant three staff that had become responsible for the SNA, were not present for the final round of data collection. As such, data collection was completed either by new workers, who had not completed the full SNA training, or by staff who were not confident with the method.

**Busy workloads**

Busy workloads impacted data collection, feedback and collaboration on each round of SNA. WCE Campus-based workers all reported they were very busy in their work, which involved large amounts of remote travel, and had large workloads which made it difficult for them to spend the time they might have liked, on SNA.

This issue is likely to occur in any similar project, and requires that we consider easier ways of collecting data, that do not add too much to people’s workloads. As noted above, perhaps a web-based calendar system could work well, but would still require that workers diligently entered all contacts.

**Integration of SNA Diagrams into project work**

Part of the early discussions around the SNA diagram use, was to present the SNA diagrams to groups within the five communities, to see if they could be used strategically within the project work. While the initial research plan only involved two rounds of data collection, a third (middle stage) round was also collected because WCE Campus-based teams thought this could be used within communities to explore, critique and better understand evolving engagement. Unfortunately, as far as I understand, this aspect of the SNA did not occur in most communities.

In Tennant Creek, only two rounds of SNA were completed because there was an intention to ‘break down’ the analysis into sectors, which would then be used in the project work. As seen in this report, that analysis did occur, but the Tennant Creek worker (Campus-based) left her position before the integration of these diagrams into the actual project work, occurred in a meaningful way.

I believe it is very important to reflect on this aspect of the SNA. One of the strengths of the method (as I have found in previous research) is the use of the diagrams to encourage reflection
and planning within communities. It would be useful to consider why these diagrams were not utilized further. If they were not useful for workers, it is important to know this, as different designs may be more appropriate or relevant. I also appreciate that the SNA is only one small aspect of a very large project, and the use of SNA diagrams may not have been a priority for workers.

For future projects, it would be good to allow more time for the integration of the diagrams into the work. Perhaps that could be a research project within itself, that is, exploring the usefulness of SNA diagrams in community engagement work.

**Summary**

The SNA has provided a strong overview of the structure and ‘amount’ of engagement that has occurred with five of the six communities within the WCE project. The engagement network diagrams show evolving engagement and provide an understanding key organisations and individuals who are critical to the project work.

Weakness of the SNA are centered of the consistency of data collected, and the amount of time that data analysis takes, particularly when so many communities are involved. If methods for collection and integration could be streamlined, then SNA could be used effectively within similar projects.
## Appendix A

### Table of abbreviations/acronyms for each community

#### Maningrida

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization/Programme</th>
<th>Abbreviation/ACRONYM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARPnet</td>
<td>ARPnet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Sports Commission</td>
<td>AusSportsCom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>BAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education</td>
<td>BIITE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maningrida Community Education Centre</td>
<td>Maningrida School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maningrida Health Clinic</td>
<td>Clinic</td>
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<td>CFC</td>
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<td>CM</td>
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<td>CM Gunbalanya</td>
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<td>Department of Children &amp; Families (NT):</td>
<td>DCF</td>
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<td>Department of Corrections (NT):</td>
<td>Corections</td>
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<td>DPMC</td>
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<td>Arts Centre</td>
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<td>Malabam Health Board Aboriginal Corporation:</td>
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<td>Narbelek Band</td>
<td>Narbelek</td>
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<td>NT Police</td>
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<td>Menzies</td>
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<td>TO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity Grammar School</td>
<td>Trinity</td>
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<td>University of Melbourne</td>
<td>UniMelb</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Southern Queensland</td>
<td>Uni Sth Qld</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Arnhem Regional Council:</td>
<td>WARC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wardekken Rangers</td>
<td>Wardekken Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole of Community Engagement:</td>
<td>WCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Homeland Teachers</td>
<td>10xHL Teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Gunbalanya

| Aboriginal Interpreter Service: | AIS       |
| Aged Care Centre:              | Aged Care |
| Arrguluk Reference Group:     | Arrguluk Ref.Group |
| ARPnet:                       | ARPnet    |
| Child & Family Centre:        | CFC       |
| Clontarf Program:             | Clontarf  |
| Community Care Centre:        | CCC       |
| Community Member:             | CM        |
| Creative Industries:          | Creative Ind.   |
| Demed:                        | Demed     |
| Department of Local & Regional Services (NT) | Dept. L & R Services |
| Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet: | DPMC |
| Gunbalanya Community School:  | GEDAC     |
| Gunbalanya Health Centre:     | Club      |
| Gunbalanya Police Station:    | Injalak Arts Centre |
| GEDAC:                        | ITAS      |
| Gunbalanya Sports & Social Club: | Jobfind |
| Injalak Arts Centre           | Meatworks |
| ITAS Tutoring                 | NAILSMA   |
| Jobfind Centres Australia     | Njanjma Rangers |
| Meatworks                     | SCfC      |
| Northern Australian Indigenous Land & Sea Mgt. | Team Health |
| Njanjma Rangers Program       | Girls Academy |
| Stronger Communities for Children: | WAR |
| Team Health                   |       |
| West Arnhem Girls Academy:   |       |
| West Arnhem Regional Council: |       |

### Yirrkala

| Arnhem Education Office:       | AEO       |
| Batchelor Institute:           | B         |
| Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre:    | BLMC      |
| CDU-OIAS                       | CDU-OIAS  |
| CDU Nhulunbuy Campus:          | CDU-Nhulunbuy |
| Community Member:              | CM        |
| Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation: | Dhimurru   |
| Department of Business (NT):   | DoB       |
| Department of Business Nhulunbuy: | NT DoB-N |
| Department of Education (NT):  | DoE       |
| East Arnhem Regional Council:  | EARC      |
| GEC Dept. Prime Minister & Cabinet: | GEC |
| Gurrutumirirr Mala:            | Gurr. Mala |
| Laynhapuy Homelands:           | Laynhapuy H’lands |
Lirrwi Tourism:       LT
Mulka Arts Centre:    Mulka
Miwatj Health:        Miwatj
Miwatj Employment and Participation: Miwatj Emp & Par
National Australia Bank: NAB
Nhulunbuy Christian College: N Christian College
Nhulunbuy School:     NS
Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation: RAC
Rurrangala Homeland School: RSAS
Whole of Community Engagement: WCE
WCE East Arnhem Team:  WCE-EAT
WCE Galiwink'u:       WCE-G
WCE Yirrkala:         WCE-Y
Yirrkala School:      Y- CEC
Yirrkala Homelands School: Y H'lands Scl.
Yirrkala Rangers:     Y Rangers
Yambirrpa School Council: Yambirrpa Scl Cnl.
Yirrkala Working Group: YWG
YYF, Rio Tinto & NT Dept. of Education: YYF, Rio Tinto , NT Dept of Ed.

Galiwinku
Birrkpirrk (RJCP):    Birrkpirrk (RJCP)
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education: BIITE
Cathy Freeman Foundation: Cathy FF
Charles Darwin University: CDU
Community Member:     CM
East Arnhem Regional Council: EARC
East Arnhem Mediation Facility: EAMF
Families as First Teachers: Faft
Galawarra Homeland:   GH
Local Authority Board: LAB
Galinwin’ku Library:  Library
Learning on Country:  Learning on Country
Marthakal Employment Services: MES
Marthakal Homelands:  MH
Miwatj Health:        Miwatj
Money Management Service: MM
Marthakal Resource Centre: MRC
Department of Education (NT): DoE
Red Cross (Safe Communities for Children): RCSCFC/Red Cross
Rangers Program:      Rangers
Remote School Attendance Services: RSAS
Shepherdson College:  Shepherdson
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Name</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yalu’</td>
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<td>WCE – G</td>
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**Tenant Creek**

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal:</td>
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Appendix 13 – Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program - Whole of Community Engagement NAILSIMA Final Report
Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program – Whole of Community Engagement
NAILSMA Final Report

Written by Erica McCreedy and Matalena Tofa

November 2016
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Report
This is the final report showcasing NAILSMA’s work in the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) Initiative.

The report includes six projects delivered in six remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory; Maningrida, Yirrkala, Tennant Creek, Yuendumu, Galiwin’ku and Gunbalanya. A series of individual community reports make up the bulk of this report and been developed so that they can be pulled out and viewed individually. Reports for Maningrida and Yirrkala are similar and some sections are repeated, as both communities participated in piloting the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management and adopted similar delivery methods during the pilot project. The report also contains Project Management Plans for each community, written with and authorised by community Elders at the start of the community projects.

Executive Summary
The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance Ltd (NAILSMA) were engaged by the Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership (OPVC-IL) of Charles Darwin University (CDU) to work with six remote Indigenous communities across the Northern Territory as part of the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program – Whole of Community Engagement Initiative (HEPPP-WCE).

NAILSMA was engaged as an expert organisation in the Indigenous land and sea management sector to identify opportunities for remote Indigenous students and adult learners to participate in higher education, specifically related to land and sea management.

NAILSMA’s component of HEPPP-WCE builds on our existing program of work and network of relationships with Indigenous communities engaged in land and sea management. NAILSMA set out to identify and work with existing programs and utilise existing partnerships with organisations, service providers and government agencies operating in these communities.

The six Indigenous communities identified to participate in the program were Maningrida, Yirrkala, Tennant Creek, Yuendumu, Galiwin’ku and Gunbalanya. NAILSMA worked with a subsection of the community that related to land and sea management. Generally, this included local Indigenous ranger groups, local schools, Traditional Owners and senior Elders. Each community was asked to identify areas that they would like to see supported in the context of education, training and career development. Project Management Plans were developed for each community over a period of up to six months to identify and clearly communicate each project’s objectives. These outlined each of the activities to be delivered in each community and were used throughout the project to track each project’s progress.

NAILSMA uses land and sea management based activities as an attraction and engagement tool to achieve employment-ready training and higher education participation outcomes including improved numeracy and literacy, attendance, and higher education pathways. An emerging feature of contemporary Indigenous land and sea management is a growing interest by Indigenous participants in leading and delivering research and management programs on Country that combine traditional and scientific knowledges and approaches. Science, scientific tools and research...
partnerships are increasingly valued by Indigenous people as they seek greater ownership of decision making and planning on the lands and seas.

A breakdown of the projects that were identified in each of the communities is summarised below.

**Maningrida and Yirrkala**

Community participants clearly articulated they wanted to see support for the recognition of the traditional and cultural knowledge their old people hold in western society. The lack of recognition for Indigenous knowledge in any formal western education and training does not acknowledge the skills and knowledge that Indigenous people bring with them through their own cultural methods of training and education. In the context of land and sea management, the training usually available to land and sea managers or people interested in land and sea management is the suite of nationally accredited Conservation and Land Management certificates. These certifications provide valuable on-ground practical skills and knowledge to learners, but do not recognise Indigenous methods of teaching and learning or, account for the role of Indigenous knowledge and culture in caring for country. As a result, it was identified that a new course should be made available that recognises Indigenous knowledge and culture and provides a start to recognising the knowledge embedded in Indigenous culture and the senior people who hold this knowledge.

Preliminary investigations of nationally accredited VET courses available in Australia revealed courses that specifically recognise Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge. The Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management is one of the courses identified and has six units that specifically recognise Indigenous Knowledge in a nationally accredited western framework, however it was not on scope in the NT at the beginning of the project. It was decided that the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management be trialled in both Maningrida and Yirrkala, as a pilot project, to determine if it would be a suitable course to have available in the NT.

The Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management is now on scope in the NT with Batchelor Institute, as a result of the pilot project. Throughout the pilot project, community members including TOs and Elders, identified the content, delivery and assessments methods of each of the Traditional Knowledge units. In Maningrida we focused on the involvement of community elders including TOs living in Maningrida and on outstations or homelands to senior Indigenous school staff and senior Rangers. In Yirrkala the pilot project focused on providing training to the Yirrkalka Rangers, which included the participation of young rangers, senior rangers and cultural advisors. The workshops also included the participation of TOs from each location the workshops were held.

The pilot was seen as successful for all participants from both Maningrida and Yirrkala. There are now further plans for NAILSMA to continue to work with Batchelor Institute to deliver the Indigenous Land Management (ILM) training. A pilot project has been identified to deliver the ILM to VETIS students with assistance from community members who were involved in the original pilot. They will co-deliver the traditional knowledge units with an accredited trainer.

Project successes include:

- Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management is now on scope in the Northern Territory (NT) with Batchelor Institute.
A VETIS ILM pilot project is being developed for delivery in 2017 to 5 schools in the NT. The pilot aims to integrate the Certificate III in ILM with the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF) or the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) where possible for the benefit of VETiS students, including Learning on Country Programs.

A ILM framework has been developed outlining the process followed and the training methodologies adopted during the pilot.

**Tennant Creek / Elliott**

At the beginning of the project, discussions with community members and organisation representatives identified a number of areas that could be supported in the region to give young people and adults the chance to further their education and link in with existing and prospective employment and business opportunities. Some of these areas requiring support included:

- training and education needs for local Indigenous owned businesses, such as fencing contract services and contract mustering.
- heritage site conservation and management.
- environmental and cultural management of tourism sites such as Lake Woods.
- environmental services for railway and roadside maintenance, including shoulder slashing.

Through consultation with project partners, community members, and Indigenous businesses, NAILSMA was directed to focus on supporting the development of a training and education pathways in Elliott. NAILSMA then worked with Elliott community members and TOs to identify a project focus: developing a Whole of Country plan for Ijibarda (Longreach Waterhole). Identifying training and education opportunities is embedded in supporting community aspirations for looking after country. Ijibarda is a significant conservation area of unmanaged high public use that is of serious concern to the (non-exclusive) Native Title holders/Traditional Owners.

The main aims of the project included:

1. Developing a Whole of Country Plan with Ijibarda Traditional Owners (TOs).
2. Supporting training pathways for an Indigenous land management business in Elliott, Triple P Contracting Pty Ltd.
3. Working with Tennant Creek High School to support pathways in land management for Indigenous high school students.

Project successes include:

- The development of the whole of country plan for Ijibarda (Longreach Waterhole). The plan provides an outline of the Traditional Owner’s vision for their country, their goals, and the strategies for achieving these goals. The Ijibarda (Longreach Waterhole) Plan takes on a holistic approach to planning, and situates formal education and training as a part of, and as a strategy for achieving the broader goals of TOs to care for country and create positive changes in their communities.
- Due to the emphasis on the importance of education and training throughout the whole project. Traditional Owners have recognised how different skillsets (e.g., business, conservation land management, mechanics etc.) are each important for caring for country and running a ranger group.
- This plan provides a framework for developing other whole of country plans for other Indigenous land and sea managers and TOs.
Yuendumu

A range of projects were identified in the Yuendumu Project Management Plan as potential projects. After a number of meetings, NAILSMA was directed by senior community members to focus on supporting the development of resources about Warlpiri birds. This builds on previous work done by the Bilingual Resource Development Unit (BRDU) at Yuendumu School, and supports the development of resources that can be used by Yuendumu School, rangers, community members, and by other schools with Warlpiri-speaking students.

The project sought to develop resources that can be used, and built upon, to support bilingual education about Warlpiri birds in schools and communities, and to highlight career pathways related to wildlife and bilingual/bicultural knowledges and skills.

The project involved:

1. Working with rangers, the BRDU, school students, families and senior community members to visit Newhaven Bird Sanctuary to observe birds and share and record stories about birds.
2. Creating a range of resources about Warlpiri birds that can be used in classrooms and by the wider community:
   b. Posters about Warlpiri birds and their habitats.
   c. A Warlpiri birds I-Tracker Application.

Project successes include:

- The development of the Jurlpu Wardikinpirri-wana - Warlpiri Bird Book. A bird reference book developed by the Yuendumu School Bilingual Resources Development Unit (BRDU) in collaboration with NAILSMA including 34 bird species that had not previously been identified in the existing dictionary, Jurlpu kuja karlipa nyanyi Yurntumu-wana (Warlpiri Bird Dictionary; Yuendumu BRDU and Central Land Council) with information and stories in both Warlpiri and English.
- The development of I-Tracker Warlpiri Bird Application that will provide an interactive tool that supports literacy skill development and learning in both English and Warlpiri, supports learners to engage with knowledge about birds digitally, and also allows learners to record extra information or stories about the birds in their communities and homelands.
- The development of bird habitat posters to accompany the bird book and I-Tracker application.

Galiwin’ku

Galiwin’ku commenced an inter-tidal monitoring project that involved Shepherdson College and Gäwa Christian School students, rangers, community members and scientists. The aim of the project was to help students identify and understand marine life associated within the tidal movements. The education pathways this project promoted required students to engage with the teaching and learning cycle Rich Focus Units from the esseNTial Learnings component of the NT Curriculum Framework (NTCF) and the Learning on Country (LOC) framework. A series of workshops were held to survey the reef in Galiwin’ku on the low tide of the full moon. Teachers and scientists worked together to develop a monitoring survey methodology that could be used by students to identify what marine life was found in the different zones, including intertidal muds, mangrove intertidal zone, shallow water intertidal and deep water to list a few. Once the ‘zone’ was determined, the
students, teachers, community Elders and scientists would then record what marine life was found in each zone. A number of surveys were conducted between April and June 2015 and 2016.

The project focused on improving mainstream literacy and numeracy, school attendance and improving bilingual outcomes for school based participants by providing interesting and culturally relevant engagement with teaching and learning activities. The project resulted in the *Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place* reference book being developed.

This reference book records Yolŋu knowledge about shellfish in a bilingual alphabetical order with Yolŋu Matha names in a number of Dhuwa and Yirritja languages. The beautifully illustrated colour book records Yolŋu knowledge about the shellfish and the environment. It includes detailed maps showing the location of shellfish and Yolŋu knowledge of the environment. The book records Yolŋu and western scientific knowledge on over 100 shellfish. Yolŋu Elders and community members contributed their extensive knowledge to the development of this resource and were involved in reviewing and editing the final book.

Project successes include:

- The development of a multilingual reference book *Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place* providing a broad volume of Yolŋu knowledge about shellfish with Yolŋu names in a number of Dhuwa and Yirritja languages, English, and Latin (Linnaean). This book, which will be use throughout Arnhem Land, is a good example of how multilingual education resources can be developed.
- Supporting on-country workshops involving school students, teachers, scientists, linguists, Traditional Owners, senior Elders and community members to share knowledge and learn about shellfish.

**Gunbalanya**

NAILSMA focused on working with the Adjumarllarl Rangers and Gunbalanya School during this project. Adjumarllarl Rangers have been operating for 30 years and cover an area of approximately 10,000sqkm. It is highly desirable for the rangers to be supported and have the opportunity to articulate their training and further education interests, both as employed rangers as well as from a personal perspective. Planning meetings were held with the rangers to determine their work schedule for the year and therefore the training and skills they required to do their work. I-Tracker training was identified as important for developing the ranger’s skills in digital data management, monitoring and evaluation of their work activities and computer and mapping training.

A number of workshops were held with the Adjumarllarl Rangers to set them up to use I-Tracker to record digital data about the work that they do. I-Tracker training was delivered in 3 steps:

1. **I-Tracker set up:** this training included computer office setup, understanding what was in the application, how to use the hardware, and how to collect information and recording sightings
2. **I-Tracker training in the field:** using I-Tracker on the job to collection information on the work that they are doing. Modifications were made to the I-Tracker application to make it
more suitable to the rangers needs, including local weed species added to ‘quick list’ with ID photos

3. I-Tracker computer training: Computer based I-Tracker training was delivered to the rangers showing them how to transfer data from mobile devices onto the computer, analyse data on the computer and produce maps and field reports.

NAILSMA also delivered I-Tracker training to Gunbalanya VETiS students interested in a career as a rangers or as butchers at the local meatworks. Working closely with the VETiS trainer, a training plan was identified to suit students interested in both employment options.

Project successes include:

- Development and delivery of an I-Tracker training plan to support rangers to develop their skills in monitoring, data collection, reporting and computer skills as part of their jobs as rangers or butchers.
- Working with Gunbalanya school and VETiS students to deliver I-Tracker training and provide students with some of the skills required to be rangers.
- Developing training portfolios for rangers to identify the skills to equip them as rangers, provide a greater understanding about the level of training they are up to and assist them to articulate their personal training aspirations.
Background

The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance Ltd (NAILSMA) were engaged by the Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership (OPVC-IL) of Charles Darwin University (CDU) to work with six remote Indigenous communities across the Northern Territory as part of the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program – Whole of Community Engagement Initiative (HEPPP-WCE).

NAILSMA was engaged as an expert organisation in the Indigenous land and sea management sector to identify opportunities for remote Indigenous students and adult learners to participate in higher education, specifically related to land and sea management.

NAILSMA’s component of HEPPP-WCE builds on our existing program of work and network of relationships with Indigenous communities engaged in land and sea management. NAILSMA set out to identify and work with existing programs and utilise existing partnerships with organisations, service providers and government agencies operating in these communities.

The six Indigenous communities identified to participate in the program were Maningrida, Yirrkala, Tennant Creek, Yuendumu, Galiwin’ku and Gunbalanya.

The project commenced in July 2014 with numerous discussions with each community to identify what was needed to support students and adults in their next stage of learning, including post school students, on-the-job training, skills development and professional development opportunities. A NAILSMA communication document outlining the project was developed to assist with community based discussions to help identify NAILSMA’s role in the project and the types of activities or projects we could support. It was made clear during early discussions that the term ‘higher education’ was well understood; for instance, many understood this term as meaning you needed to leave your community to attend a university in the city, and this was not immediately relevant or realistic to many remote community members at that time. Further discussions identified that using the terms ‘higher education’ and ‘further learning’ interchangeably was more suitable and helped people to get a better understanding of what education opportunities were available.

It was also important to identify that many community members are already engaging with or working in higher education. With numerous research projects going on in communities at one time, community members are participating or assisting researchers with their work. Many Indigenous Ranger groups are working with scientists, government agencies and other research organisations to carry out environmental management and monitoring programs using both Indigenous Knowledge and robust scientific methodologies.

Each community identified different projects that they wanted to see supported in their communities. Individual project management plans were developed for each community to identify clear objectives and outcomes for each project, to assist with monitoring progress throughout the project timeline, and to identify where things changed, if at all, during the projects and new directions were taken or added to the project objectives.
The overall project aim was to identify and develop realistic pathways to higher education for Indigenous learners based in remote communities related to land and sea management. The project was originally focused on higher education being Diploma level or above and entrance to a university. Early in the project, it became clear that a number of other pressures on the remote education meant that the discussions around higher education were not an immediate priority. Remote schools faced funding cuts across the NT, bilingual programs were not being supported, the Indigenous Education Strategy was being rolled out and some remote schools were unsure if they would be operating in 2015, or be able to offer anything beyond primary/middle school level. These pressures continued in 2016. Discussions for supporting ‘higher education’ pathways, changed to supporting ‘further education’ and for many communities and community schools, VET is a realistic pathway for school age or adult learners to engage in further learning opportunities. Many schools are now offering students VET in Schools (VETiS) pathways as well as an ‘academic’ pathway towards the completion of a Year 12 certificate and Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER). Although VET is offered in many remote communities, availability of course units is usually lacking and delivery methods and resources used are generally not locally contextualised or culturally relevant. More support for developing VET availability and delivery in remote communities as a further learning opportunity and a pathway to higher education was a key focus of this project.

**Project Management Plans**

Project Management Plans were developed with each of the participating communities at the beginning of the project to identify key areas of interest relating to ‘higher education’ or ‘further learning,’ aspirations and specific areas that could be supported through HEPPP.

The Project Management Plans identified and clearly communicated the project objectives, outlining each of the activities to be delivered in each community and were used throughout the project to track each project’s progress. The development of each plan has enabled other service providers working with NAILSMA to identify areas they may be able to support, whether the projects and work that they are engaged in align with HEPPP project priorities, or where collaborative partnerships may be formed to support the community’s education aspirations.

This final report uses the Project Management Plans to reflect on what was identified as important at the beginning of the project, what was achieved, what changed, and some of the future opportunities to support further education in these communities. Sections of each community’s Project Management Plans are included in this report to enable links to be drawn between the direction the project took and the project outcomes relevant to the project objectives.

**Land and Sea Management as a tool for further learning**

NAILSMA uses land and sea management based activities as an attraction and engagement tool to achieve employment-ready training and higher education participation outcomes including improved numeracy and literacy, attendance, and higher education pathways. An emerging feature of contemporary Indigenous land and sea management is a growing interest by Indigenous participants in leading and delivering research and management programs on Country that combine traditional and scientific knowledges and approaches. Science, scientific tools and research partnerships are increasingly valued by Indigenous people as they seek greater ownership of
decision making and planning on the lands and seas. A growing array of new threats and impacts, as well as opportunities such as carbon farming, livelihood development and protected area management, mean that research and science has increasingly greater relevance to Indigenous communities.

Through field work and participatory action research, appropriate locally driven educational activities that promote Indigenous knowledge systems become a vehicle for the effective transfer of Western scientific and technical skills for Indigenous students.

Practical learning on country activities enhance local knowledge and support mainstream education outcomes. The significance of local and traditional knowledge to higher education lies in its capacity to engender confidence, enhance psychological resilience and promote positive personal identity in learners. This is particularly significant where mainstream language and culture are effectively foreign to the local learning environment. Confidence in local languages and knowledge systems is both significant to learning in a mainstream context and is a critical foundation for active engagement in emerging land management economies, future livelihoods and employment outcomes, for example fire and carbon abatement, biodiversity management and payment for environmental services more generally.

The NAILSMA component of the HEPPP-WCE Initiative builds on this interest and set out to work within existing partnerships and networks to:

- Articulate the links between Indigenous aspirations for management of country and the benefits and opportunities of engaging in higher education;
- Identify opportunities and impediments to greater Indigenous participation in higher education in the context of land and sea management, including livelihood development;
- Provide on-country, in-university and other opportunities for Indigenous community leaders and members to learn about and engage in research and higher education, including but not limited to activities relevant to Indigenous land and sea management; and
- Encourage the growing interest of young Indigenous people in career paths towards a number of topic areas including rangers and Natural and Cultural Resource Management, and linking this to the requirements for individual success in primary, secondary and higher education.
Maningrida

Maningrida Project Management Plan

1. Background

Initial discussions have been held with community members, local rangers groups, service providers, and other community organisations across all sites to identify areas that can be supported through the HEPPP-WCE initiative to enhance opportunities for community members to participate in higher education.

Through community scoping workshops in Maningrida, it was identified that barriers to higher education and employment for adults in environmental management was low literacy and numeracy and no formal recognition of Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge.

Currently Conservation and Land Management (CLM) certifications are the only units available to Indigenous land and sea managers in remote communities. Therefore, most Indigenous land and sea managers, including rangers and school age VET students are enrolled in this course. While CLM is relevant to Indigenous land and sea managers, teaching and certifying necessary operations skills, there are criticisms as to the lack of recognition for Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge held by senior community members, rangers and others this also of relevance to their work and responsibilities in looking after their estates.

There are currently two main Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in the Northern Territory, Charles Darwin University (CDU) and Bachelor Indigenous Institute for Tertiary Education (BIITE) that predominantly delivers CLM VET training to remote Indigenous communities. Due to funding, CDU and BIITE are able to provide Vocational Education Training (VET) to Indigenous students in remote NT (>80 km outside regional centres) at little to no cost to the student, therefore organisations opt to use CDU and BI as their training providers. Further investigation is required to identify whether this funding is available to private or independent RTOs to encourage a competitive and accountable delivery process and potentially broaden the scope of courses currently available in the NT.

Preliminary investigations of nationally accredited VET courses available in Australia has revealed courses that specifically recognise Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge. The courses relevant to land and sea managers are also made up of units based on operational skills and knowledge required to undertake general land and sea management operations. These courses include:

- AHC31510 Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management
- AHC32513 Certificate III in Aboriginal Sites Work
- AHCSS00013 Report on Aboriginal Cultural Sites Skill Set
- 10412NAT Certificate II, IV and Diploma in Indigenous Leadership

The above courses contain units that provide credit towards a Diploma in Conservation and Land Management. This forms a direct pathway for participants to enter into Higher Education qualifications. They also comprise of units that recognises Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge within a nationally accredited framework. The course material for these units also identifies that local cultural knowledge may only be accessible to those individuals who identify as elders or who are authorised by local elders on behalf of their communities. If these units were to be ‘put on scope’ by an RTO in the NT, there would be greater employment opportunities, capacity building and recognition of skills and knowledge for senior local community members to be involved in the delivery of these units.
Engagement with relevant Indigenous community members is key to the success of this pilot project. The details of local course content, delivery methods, and evaluation will be driven by locally identified community members. Qualified trainers (including local community members where available) will work alongside community members to determine the accreditation process for participants to complete training in Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management.

2. Pilot Study
Pilot project to trial the delivery of culturally relevant nationally accredited certifications not currently available in the Northern Territory

The pilot project will use a participatory action research approach to bring together Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge and expertise and ensure the project is community driven and supports training and education priorities. The pilot project aims to identify and trial the delivery of select units sources from nationally accredited certifications available outside of the NT, including; Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management, Certificate III in Aboriginal Sites Work, and Certificate II, IV in Indigenous Leadership. The units to be delivered will be identified by the community to ensure they are culturally relevant and of interest to participants. This pilot study aims to do a comparative analysis between the above mentioned courses and the currently available Conservation and Land Management (CLM) course. The roll out of the above units would not replace CLM, but will provide more opportunities in employment and education for remote community members participating in land and sea management VET. An independent RTO, Darwin Education and Training Services, has been identified and requested by Maningrida community members to coordinate this training.

This pilot study aims to:
- Explore the suitability and relevance of the above accredited VET course units for remote Indigenous land and sea managers through the delivery of on-country workshops
- Gather evidence that supports the need for RTOs to offer these units to provide more opportunities for remote Indigenous students to develop pathways towards higher education
- Develop a framework that identifies the employment and engagement of senior local people as consultants and possible trainers to assist in the delivery of units, particularly those containing Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge
- Provide opportunities for participants to gain Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) for the units they participate in
- Train community members and organisation staff to collect evidence as needed for RPL process
- Communicate project outcomes and learnings in appropriate forms.

3. Community involvement
Community participation in this pilot study is key to identifying the cultural appropriateness and relevance of the courses being trialled. Senior community members will drive the content and delivery of the chosen units. Community members will work with the professional VET trainers to ensure that participants gain recognition for their involvement in the training due to recognised prior learning processes. Local assessment criteria will be developed with senior and relevant community members to guide RTOs to appropriately assess units with local knowledge components.
Key community partners will include:

- Djelk Rangers
  - Senior rangers have been identified to participate in the workshops
- Senior community members.
  - Senior members have been identified to participate in the workshops and to assist in the delivery of the workshop content.
- Wiwa – Community Media Project (RJCP)
  - Wiwa have been engaged to document the workshops. Wiwa program participants will also have the opportunity to engage and benefit from the workshops as part of their Certificate II in Media.
- Language and Cultural Centre (Maningrida School)
  - Language and Cultural Centre have been asked to participate in the program as a professional development opportunity and to assist trainers and community members to communicate through first language preferences.
- Maningrida School
  - The school will be involved through the engagement of various programs within the school, such as the Language and Cultural Centre, Learning on Country Program and the Young Indigenous Leadership Program.

4. External Partners
Darwin Education and Training Solutions (DETS) have been engaged by NAILSMA to work with the community members to identify appropriate course content and assessment criteria for the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management VET course. NAILSMA will hold meetings with BI, CDU and other RTOs, education institutions and relevant organisations to discuss the possibilities of getting the identified units on scope, the development of a framework that employs local senior people to lead or co-facilitate the delivery of units containing the Indigenous cultural knowledge. NAILSMA will work with external partners to identify services for remote Indigenous students that support Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN), knowledge retention, job related skills and education and employment pathways. NAILSMA will work closely with HEPPP-WCE partners including, Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Institute (BI), Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Education (ACIKE) and the Northern Territory Government (NTG) to identify synergies across other areas of the program and collaborate where appropriate.

Maningrida Project Delivery and Outcomes
It was originally identified that a subset of units from four different nationally accredited qualifications, including; Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management, Certificate III in Aboriginal Sites Work, and Certificate II, IV in Indigenous Leadership, be piloted to determine the suitability and cultural relevance of these VET units not currently available in the Northern Territory.
By the time the project was identified and agreed on by community members, the pilot would go for just over a year, not enough time to sufficiently trial each of these different units. Therefore, it was decided that the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management be trialled for its close alignment to the Conservation and Land Management Certification that is currently available in most communities and is also generally the required training of Indigenous Rangers and land and sea managers.
The Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management has six units that specifically recognise Indigenous Knowledge in a nationally accredited western framework. These units can not only be delivered as part of an Indigenous Land Management Certificate, but also as part of the Conservation Land Management Certification and as elective units for a range of other VET certificates. As the Indigenous Land Management Certificate III was not on scope with any RTO in NT at the beginning of the trial, it was identified that working with both Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute during the trial was an important aspect of determining the future delivery of the Indigenous Land Management units.

During the pilot, it was important to determine what community members, including Traditional Owners and Elders thought about each of the ILM units and whether or not they thought the units were culturally appropriate. It was also important to enable community participants to identify the content, delivery and assessments methods of the Traditional Knowledge units. Independent VET trainers were engaged to work with community members and advise on the VET requirements of delivering and assessing units. The independent trainers, Darwin Education and Training Services, were requested by Maningrida community members due to their experience with delivering various training in the community for over a decade.

The Certificate III Indigenous Land Management traditional knowledge units include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Code</th>
<th>Unit Title</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM302</td>
<td>Provide appropriate information on cultural knowledge</td>
<td>- Maintenance of cultural knowledge by Indigenous people and if and how this knowledge may be provided to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Investigate cultural knowledge in accordance with cultural protocols; between land features, seasons and spirituality; animals and resources used for medicine and food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM305</td>
<td>Work with an Aboriginal Community or organisation</td>
<td>- Process of operating in an Aboriginal Community or organisation while demonstrating an awareness of Aboriginal identity, history and spirituality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM306</td>
<td>Follow Aboriginal cultural protocols</td>
<td>- Protocols involved in Aboriginal culture, including the need to identify the appropriate person/s when approaching a Community and the cultural and social protocols associated with that task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM308</td>
<td>Identify traditional customs and land rights for an Indigenous Community</td>
<td>- Use of traditional customs by Indigenous people in caring for country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(previously AHCILM301A)</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Outline importance of native title rights and interests recognised under non-indigenous law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITTGDE001</td>
<td>Interpret aspects of local Australian Indigenous culture</td>
<td>- Recognises that there is no single Australian Indigenous culture and emphasises the importance of local cultural knowledge, appropriate behaviour and local community consultation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes of the pilot study
The Certificate III Indigenous Land Management Indigenous knowledge units were piloted at two communities in NT, Maningrida and Yirrkala. Both pilots set out to identify if these units would be culturally relevant and provide training that was not currently available in communities. By trialling these units in both communities, we wanted to determine whether or not the units were broadly applicable, regardless of language spoken, location, age, or level of learners. In Maningrida we focused on the involvement of community elders, including Traditional Owners living in Maningrida and on outstations or homelands, and senior Indigenous school staff and senior Rangers. In Yirrkala we focused the pilot project around providing training to the Yirralka Rangers, which included the participation of young rangers, senior rangers and cultural advisors. The workshops also included the participation of Traditional Owners from each location the workshops were held. There were much larger numbers of participants at workshops in the Yirrkala region, but the delivery of workshops followed the same method. Further comparisons between the two sites are provided later in the report.

In Maningrida the makeup of workshop participants varied and included community Elders who also worked at Maningrida College as Language and Culture staff, Nursery staff, Traditional Owners, Senior Rangers and other senior community members. With numerous the languages spoken in Maningrida the workshops were delivered in English, deliberations were done in local languages, and then recorded in English, considering any one workshop had up to six different languages groups represented.

Feedback from community participants has been received continuously throughout the pilot project. Throughout the pilot project, the review and breakdown of each of the Indigenous Land Management units occurred to ensure that they were both culturally suitable and relevant to a range of students, from school students to adults engaging in on-the-job training. The units have been identified as filling a gap in the western education sector by recognising Indigenous knowledge and modes of learning. Decisions about what would be taught for each unit were left up to Traditional Owners and community members. This meant that each unit focused on a different topic depending on who was present, what country the workshop was taking place on, and what people considered relevant or missing from other training. The delivery of these units on-country meant that Traditional Owners oversaw and determined the content and delivery methods of the training.

The development of training content by Traditional Owners, Elders or Custodians is crucial and must be followed as already indicated as a directed of the traditional knowledge units. Each unit states:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Code</th>
<th>Unit Title</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM307</td>
<td>Implement Aboriginal cultural burning practices</td>
<td>This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to use traditional Aboriginal controlled burning practices on Country to manage natural and cultural resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: The Certificate III Indigenous Land Management traditional knowledge units
Assessment of this unit must be conducted by recognised and appropriate Community Elders and/or Custodians with appropriate assessor qualifications or co-assessed by a qualified assessor in cooperation and discussion with an appropriate Community Elders and/or Custodians.

This directive provides a strong and clear statement that the appropriate community Elders must assess or co-assess the delivery of these units. This also provides insurance that appropriate community members must remain the trainers and assessors of these units, identifying the content and methods of delivery well into the future. Therefore, the ongoing delivery of these units post pilot project will have a level of protection to ensure that they remain driven by community elders.

RTOs that take on the delivery of these units in the future will need to ensure that content and delivery of these units is done so with the community elders within communities. An ILM framework was also developed to capture the best practice methods used during the pilot project to develop unit content and delivery. This framework can be used as a guide to RTOs and other trainers delivering ILM units or similar.

The workshops also focus on identifying and strengthening leadership qualities within senior rangers, community members and cultural advisors to enhance their capabilities as trainers, leaders and mentors to other rangers and students.

Approximately 30 participants have been involved in the workshops including Elders, Traditional Owners, rangers, teachers, teacher’s assistants, VET in School students (VETiS) and other community members.

ILM Training Framework
This pilot aimed to develop a culturally appropriate context for delivering units that recognise Traditional Ecological Knowledge in a western framework. The development of ILM Framework was to support the learning and delivery methods identified during each of the workshops. The Framework identifies the details of the processes that were followed during the pilot project. All workshops supported participants to refine, deliver, and assess nationally accredited units. This involved participants breaking down each of the unit elements, translating each one into their preferred language and subsequently developing a culturally appropriate learning framework that focuses on delivering nationally accredited training in first language and supporting Indigenous leaders to be trainers and training co-facilitators. The framework identifies the employment and engagement of senior local people as consultants and co-assessors to assist in the delivery of units, particularly those containing Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge.

The table below is a brief outlook on what the steps involved in the ILM training Framework.
Recognised Prior Learning
Prior to the ILM being put on scope at Batchelor Institute, five ILM workshops to pilot 5 different Certificate III ILM units were delivered to over 15 community participants, not including VETiS students. Each person was either involved in one workshops or numerous, with a majority of participants participating in more than workshops. During these workshops evidence was collected for each person to demonstrate their involvement in each of the workshops and record their skills and knowledge for the purpose of seeking Recognised Prior Learning (RPL). Once the ILM Certificate was put on scope at Batchelor Institute, we were able to commence the process of submitting individual training portfolios for each participant to Batchelor Institute to be used towards the RPL process.

The evidence collected during each of the workshops has been identified in the ILM Framework to assist community members and partner organisations wanting to collect evidence for students to gain RPL in the future.

Integration of ILM in VET in Schools (VETiS) and Learning on Country Program (LoCP)
Both Maningrida and Yirrkala have a Learning on Country Program (LoCP), which is a formal partnership between the school and the local ranger group. LoCP is an innovative educational approach bringing together Indigenous land and sea rangers, schools, scientists and Indigenous land owners ‘on country’ and in classrooms to learn literacy and numeracy, science and work skills as well as local Indigenous knowledge. Currently LoCP students are enrolled in a Conservation and Land
Management (CLM) certification, enabling students to develop and learn skills related to practical on-ground land and sea management and aligned with Australian Curriculum (AC), the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF) and/or the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) requirements. The CLM certification does not enable cultural knowledge to be taught through accredited CLM units. The partnership between the school and the local ranger program through LoCP means that rangers are involved in the co-delivery of accredited training to school students. By piloting the delivery of the Indigenous Land Management traditional knowledge units with Language and Culture teachers, senior rangers and community Elders, it is envisioned that pilot project participants will develop the skills and knowledge to become the trainers and co-assessors of the cultural knowledge units assisting students to gain Cert III accreditation to progress their individual studies.

A VETiS workshop was held in August 2016 with approximately 10 Maningrida College secondary students involved in the Learning on Country Program, 3 Land and Culture teachers and Traditional Owners from Ji-bena were the workshop was held. The workshop was based on learning about and carrying out a traditional burn for the purpose of hunting. The activity was part of the practical activity/assessment for units AHCILM306, Follow Aboriginal Cultural Protocols and AHCILM307, Implement Aboriginal Cultural Burning Practices. Prior to the on-ground activity with VETiS students, Language and Culture Staff and community Elders did a AHCILM306 workshop where they used the unit to plan for a traditional burn using cultural protocols to identify the process of teaching and implementing a cultural burn.

The practical activity for students was in line with the unit AHCILM307. The unit describes the skills and knowledge required to use traditional Aboriginal controlled burning practices on country to manage natural and cultural resources. The students were involved in identifying what plants are used as tools for burning, how to harvest them and prepare them for use.

**ILM is now on scope**

As a result of the pilot project, in June 2016 the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management was put on scope at Batchelor Institute. This certificate and specifically the Indigenous Knowledge units are now available throughout the NT. The formal delivery of this course will ensure that culturally relevant education opportunities are available to regional and remote Indigenous learners and communities.

NAILSMA continues to work with Batchelor Institute to deliver the ILM into the immediate future. NAILSMA will continue to review resources and methods of delivery and ensure that the appropriate community members continue to identify and drive the delivery of these units.

**Training Portfolios**

It was identified early in the project that a number of adults undertaking remote VET training are enrolled in or have recently taken part in training that is lower than their highest qualification. For example, numerous participants who had completed a Certificate II in Conservation Land Management and should be doing training that is Certificate III level or higher, were being enrolled and trained in Certificate I and II units. There needs to be a system whereby the trainer is aware of their students’ previous learning history so they are not repeating units or enrolled in units lower
than their last qualification. The Unique Student Identifier (USI) will assist in this, but only for students commencing study from 2015, any study prior is unlikely to be included in this database. Academic assessment records were sought for each student from CDU and Batchelor Institute to determine what training participants had been involved in to date. Conversations were held with individuals to identify what their education and career aspirations were and what training options were available to support these pathways. Training and development plans were given to each participant to provide a greater understanding about the level of training they are up to, assist them to be in control of their training, and to safeguard against being continually enrolled in training that is below their qualification level or not relevant to their education and career aspirations.

**Maningrida and Yirrkala Pilot Project Workshops**
The table below shows the different activities and Indigenous knowledge that was covered during the pilot project workshops. The table represents the broad application of these units depending on participants present, location of workshop and topics of interest to each group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Maningrida</th>
<th>Yirrkala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM301A Propose appropriate uses of traditional customs</td>
<td>Engaged with Native Title Lawyers to discuss land tenure and how Indigenous law intersects with Western law and making sense of that from each local context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM302A Provide appropriate information on cultural knowledge</td>
<td>Bush food and bush medicine walk identifying and explaining plant use, preparation processes and seasonality of use</td>
<td>Bush food, bush medicine and bush resources discussed and demonstrated through the spearing and preparation of a wallaby. Demonstrated how to cook it on the fire and how to cut it up traditional ways. Identified what each part of the wallaby was used for and how to prepare parts of the wallaby for eating, for medicine or for tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITTGDE009A Interpret aspects of local Australian Indigenous culture</td>
<td>Visited the community art centre and discussed various art relevant to the individual, how knowledge is shared, who has the right to knowledge, etc</td>
<td>Acted out a ‘discipline lesson’ about people not respecting country and what happens. The role of Traditional Owners in making decisions about what happens if people disrespect country or if cultural protocols are not followed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM306 Follow Aboriginal cultural protocols</td>
<td>Planned a traditional hunting activity using traditional burning techniques to hunt small mammals</td>
<td>Based this unit around discussion on how to develop a problem baru management plan. Identifying the cultural protocols and correct processes that must be followed when discussing and dealing with problem crocodiles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each of the activities identified above were chosen by the community participants at each workshop and each of the workshops go towards accrediting each participant in their Certificate III studies, either specifically as part of a Cert III in Indigenous Land Management, or as an elective to other certifications. The variation in activities across sites demonstrates that the units are broadly applicable to different communities and community participants. The assessment process for each unit will take place under the guidance and assessment of an appropriate community member, as indicated in the above statement, who can identify if individuals have the skills and knowledge as required. For the assessment process and the evidence required for each student by RTOs, resources have been developed with observational assessment tasks and in line with RTO regulation and requirements, but also respectful to Indigenous methods of teaching and learning.

**Group Activities or Group Knowledge**

Most activities were delivered as a group. Indigenous knowledge was demonstrated to be of different levels depending on the individuals, their age, their kinship system, on whose country the activity was taking place and the cultural protocols associated with the activity or place. Hence, during the activities, individuals had different roles to play within the group, and people would help each other out with each stage of the task that was identified. Indigenous knowledge is usually owned by a clan, a family, a kinship system, a totem group, a gender group, and rarely an individual person. Thus, traditional western assessment methods of assessing the individual student in isolation to their peers is not a relevant method for assessing or teaching these units. Group activities were identified within each workshop and questions were discussed together in first language and then answered by group representatives.

**ILM VET Resources**

Certificate III Indigenous Land Management traditional knowledge VET Resources have been developed for use by Batchelor and NAILSMA in the future delivery of these units. As already indicated, the resources have been developed to follow a few key principles:

- The assessment process for each unit will take place under the guidance and assessment by an appropriate community member/s or Traditional Owners;
- Assessment tasks will be assessed by the assessor/s through a series of observations that are in line with RTO regulation and requirements; and

| AHCILM307 Implement Aboriginal cultural burning practices | Continuation of the unit AHCILM306, Maningrida College Language and Culture teachers delivered part of this unit to Learning on Country and VETiS students. The students were learnt and participated in about a traditional burn for the purpose of hunting. |

Table 2: Maningrida and Yirrkala Workshop activities comparison
• Assessment activities will be identified by appropriate community members/Traditional Owners to ensure training and assessment methods are in accordance with cultural protocols.

Each of the six units have Assessors Guides, Learning Assessment Records and Study Guides. The resources have been developed to ASQA standards and have attempted to satisfy the requirements of the RTO as well as be responsive to the cultural requirements of Indigenous teaching and learning methods. NAILSMA, with input from community members, will continue to work with Batchelor Institute to fine tune VET unit resources as the units are delivered to more communities across the NT.

We envisage that these units will enable a large number of Indigenous land and sea managers to gain recognition for their cultural knowledge relevant to managing land and sea country. In addition, these units may also enable more VETiS students to complete Certificate III level studies with the support and guidance of senior community members, and will also support pathways for remote Indigenous learners to higher certificate levels.

**Challenges**

There were few challenges throughout the course of the pilot project. The project was supported by community members ranging from organisations initially supporting a few staff to be involved in the workshops to entire teams to being involved. The workshops had a cross-section of participants throughout, as it is always a challenge to organise workshops times that suit everybody’s availability and other commitments. Regardless we had a good turnout of participants at each workshop and received good feedback throughout.

The greatest challenge for this project was working with RTOs towards getting the ILM on scope and available as an accredited course in the NT. Initially discussions with both CDU and Batchelor Institute were held to identify potential support. Both institutions were supportive in the early stages of the project and a number of avenues were explored to ensure the culturally appropriate delivery of the ILM post pilot project. Discussions with each RTO met its own challenges with changes in management, questions of relevancy of the units and misunderstandings of how the delivery of these types of units could possibly work across different communities with different beliefs, cultures and different methods of teaching and learning. After numerous meetings and extensive discussion to identify an appropriate way for both the RTO and community elders to continue to deliver these units, the Certificate III in ILM was put on scope at Batchelor in June 2016.

**Future directions**

The Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management will continue to be delivered by NAILSMA in partnership with Batchelor Institute in 2017 and beyond. A number of other interested groups including schools with a VETiS program and ranger groups from across the NT would like to receive training in 2017. Pilot project participants are in a position to work with trainers as co-assessors for the ILM Indigenous knowledge units, which NAILSMA will continue to support.
VETiS ILM for 2017
NAILSMA will continue to work with both Maningrida and Yirrkala to deliver the ILM in collaboration with Batchelor Institute. A project plan is being developed between the two organisations to deliver the ILM traditional knowledge units to VETiS students officially commencing in 2017. Additional schools have expressed interest in being a part of this project, and we are hopeful that this will occur. In Maningrida, community elders involved in the ILM pilot project during 2015 and 2016 have been identified to deliver these units to Maningrida College students. A planning meeting is identified for early 2017 with all relevant parties to discuss how the ILM will benefit students and assist towards graduating year 12.

Other opportunities for ILM
The Indigenous Land Management Certificate traditional knowledge units cover broad aspects of culture knowledge and protocols such as:

- Maintenance of cultural knowledge by Indigenous people and if and how this knowledge may be provided to others
- Process of operating in an Aboriginal Community or organisation while demonstrating an awareness of Aboriginal identity, history and spirituality
- Protocols involved in Aboriginal culture, including the need to identify the appropriate person/s when approaching a Community and the cultural and social protocols associated
- Recognises that there is no single Australian Indigenous culture and emphasises the importance of local cultural knowledge, appropriate behaviour and local community consultation.

These concepts are widely applicable to working with and in Indigenous communities. Although the unit is a Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management, the units could be applicable to Indigenous health, education, leadership and business enterprises. This training is directed by community Elders, therefore the topics covered are relevant to community members and could discuss cultural protocols and concepts across a number of areas. A number of other Indigenous communities and Indigenous organisations have indicated their interest in receiving ILM training to support future generations to have more opportunities to learn traditional and cultural knowledge and methods of learning. Elliott and Gunbalanya community members are two communities within the HEPPP-WCE initiative that have expressed interest.

Other VET pathways
Similar work could be done to look into the validity and cultural relevance of other VET certificates such as the Certificate III in Aboriginal Sites Work, and Certificate II, IV in Indigenous Leadership. Although these units were not looked into during this project due to time and funding constraints of the project, they are of interest. VET is an alternative training and education pathway for remote learners wanting to further their learning, and is increasingly offered in remote schools as an alternative to a standard ‘academic’ pathway; therefore, more work to support culturally appropriate VET certificates and delivery would be beneficial.

Below are photos taken at the Indigenous Land Management Pilot Project workshops from April 2015 to September 2016.
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Yirrkala

Yirrkala Project Management Plan

1. Background

Discussions have been held with community members, local ranger groups, school principals, service providers, and other community organisations across all sites to identify areas that can be supported through the HEPPP-WCE initiative to enhance opportunities for community members to participate in higher education. There are number of crosscutting themes that have been identified across a range of remote community sites involved in the Higher Education and Learning on Country Programs. These included:

- inability of training providers to deliver adequate and timely accredited training due to limited resources
- no formal recognition of Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge
- barriers to further education and employment opportunities for post-secondary students and adults due to low literacy and numeracy

Currently Conservation and Land Management (CLM) certifications are the large majority of units available to Indigenous land and sea managers in remote communities. Therefore, most Indigenous land and sea managers, including rangers and school age VET students are enrolled in this course. While CLM is relevant to Indigenous land and sea managers, teaching and certifying necessary operations skills, there are criticisms as to the lack of recognition for Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge held by senior community members, rangers and others that is also of relevance to their work and responsibilities in looking after their estates.

There are two publically funded Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in the Northern Territory, Charles Darwin University (CDU) and Bachelor Indigenous Institute for Tertiary Education (BIITE) that deliver CLM VET training to remote Indigenous communities. Due to funding, CDU and BITTE are able to provide Vocational Education Training (VET) to Indigenous students in remote NT (>50km outside regional centres) at little to no cost to the student, therefore organisations opt to use CDU and BI as their training providers.

NTG is reviewing the recurrent funding arrangements for RTOs. NAILSMA would like to investigate the requirements for RTOs receiving recurrently funding and whether or not this funding is available to independent RTOs to encourage a competitive and accountable delivery process and potentially broaden the scope of courses currently available in the NT.

Preliminary investigations of nationally accredited VET courses available in Australia has revealed courses that specifically recognise Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge. The courses relevant to land and sea managers are also made up of units based on operational skills and knowledge required to undertake general land and sea management operations. These courses include:

- AHC31510 Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management
- AHC32513 Certificate III in Aboriginal Sites Work
- AHCSS00013 Report on Aboriginal Cultural Sites Skill Set
The above courses contain units that provide credit towards a Diploma in Conservation and Land Management. This forms a direct pathway for participants to enter into Higher Education qualifications. They also comprise of units that recognises Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge within a nationally accredited framework. The course material for these units also identifies that local cultural knowledge may only be accessible to those individuals who identify as elders or who are authorised by local elders on behalf of their communities. If these units were to be ‘put on scope’ by an RTO in the NT, there would be greater employment opportunities, capacity building and recognition of skills and knowledge for senior local community members to be involved in the delivery of these units.

2. Pilot Study

The pilot project will use a participatory action research approach to bring together Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge and expertise and ensure the project is community driven and supports training and education priorities. The pilot project aims to identify and trial the delivery of select units sources from nationally accredited certifications available outside of the NT, including; *Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management and Certificate II, IV in Indigenous Leadership*. The units to be delivered will be identified by the community to ensure they are culturally relevant and of interest to participants. This pilot study aims to do a comparative analysis between the above mentioned courses and the currently available Conservation and Land Management (CLM) course. The roll out of the above units would not replace CLM, but will provide more opportunities in employment and education for remote community members participating in land and sea management VET.

This Pilot Study is currently being trialled in Maningrida with a focus on building the skills, knowledge and capacity of senior elders in the Maningrida community to complete their training to enable them to become the course trainers in collaboration with larger RTOs.

The focus of the Pilot Study in Yirrkala will take a slightly different approach to ensure it can be integrated into and compliment the Learning on Country Program (LoCP). The Learning on Country Program (LoCP) is an innovative educational approach bringing together Indigenous land and sea Rangers, schools, scientists and Indigenous land owners ‘on country’ and in classrooms to learn literacy and numeracy, science and work skills as well as local Indigenous knowledge. Currently LoCP students are enrolled in a CLM certification. While this will enable students to develop and learn skills related to practical on-ground management and aligned with Australian Curriculum (AC), the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF) and /or the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) requirements, however cultural knowledge is not taught through accredited CLM units. The partnership between the school and the local ranger program through LoCP means that rangers are involved in the co-deliver of accredited training to school students. By piloting the delivery of the Indigenous Land Management unit, rangers involved in LoCP will be able to teach students cultural knowledge alongside western science and gain Cert III accreditation to progress their individual studies. For example, the Cert III in Indigenous Land Management can include traditional fire management practices and indigenous leadership capacity building.
Integrating the Pilot Study with AC & NTCF in the Yirrkala Homeland Schools

Yirrkala Homelands School is working with the Yirralka Rangers and the Laynhapuy homeland communities to develop the Learning on Country Program (LoCP).

The Learning on Country Program incorporates the Australian Curriculum and Northern Territory Curriculum Framework outcomes with Conservation and Land Management units of competency under the direction of the visiting teachers and the Indigenous homeland centre teachers. The curriculum outcomes include: maths, science, English as a Second Language (ESL) Indigenous languages and culture. Another core consideration in the LoCP is the intergenerational knowledge transfer between the students, rangers and senior Yolŋu. The development of the ILM unit materials in association with the existing LoC program will allow for a broader range of local Indigenous cultural knowledge to be identified, developed and embedded into curricula for the benefit or the homeland students and their families, which will facilitate further pathways for their ongoing education and employment.

This pilot study aims to:

- Explore the suitability and relevance of the above accredited VET course units for remote Indigenous land and sea managers through the delivery of on-country workshops
- Do a comparative analysis on evidence derived from Maningrida and Yirrkala to support the need for RTOs to offer these units to provide more opportunities for remote Indigenous students to develop pathways towards higher education
- Contribute to the overarching framework that will be developed through the trial of the ILM pilot project in Yirrkala and Maningrida. The framework will identify the employment and engagement of senior local people as consultants and possible trainers to assist in the delivery of units, particularly those containing Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge
- Provide opportunities for participants to gain Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) for the units they participate in
- Integrate the Certificate III in ILM with the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF) or the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) where possible for the future benefit of the Learning on Country Program participants

Workshops and Training

The workshops to trial the Certification III in Indigenous Land Management (ILM) will involve training senior Yirralka Rangers who are involved in the Learning on Country (LOC) program as mentors to Yirrkala Homelands students. The rangers will discuss and decide on various activities and knowledge they will teach students as per the LOC framework.

The rangers will trial the delivery of the Certificate III in ILM, while the LOC students will complete their Certificate I units in Conservation and Land Management (CLM). The reasoning behind this is to upskill the rangers and identify future training and professional development pathways for each person, while facilitating the intergenerational knowledge transfer between the senior rangers and LOC students.

Each workshop will run for approximately 3-4 days and involve one-on-one training with the rangers prior to the delivery of the workshop involving LOC students to identify the content and delivery methods of the workshops. Each workshop will need to fit in with NTEC requirements and the LOC.
framework to ensure students are not disrupted from intended school work, but is instead enhanced.

3. Community involvement
Engagement with relevant Indigenous community members is key to the success of this pilot project. The details of local course content, delivery methods, and evaluation will be driven by locally identified community members. Qualified trainers (including local community members where available) will work alongside community members to determine the accreditation process for participants to complete training in Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management.

Key community partners may include:
- Yirrkala Homelands School
- Yirrkala School
- Learning on Country Program
- Yirralka Rangers
- Dhimurru Rangers
- Senior community members
- Mulka Media Centre

4. External Partners
Darwin Education and Training Solutions (DETS) have been engaged by NAILSMA to work with the community members to identify appropriate course content and assessment criteria for the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management VET course.

NAILSMA will hold meetings with BI, CDU and other RTOs, education institutions and relevant organisations to discuss the possibilities of getting the identified units on scope, the development of a framework that employs local senior people to lead or co-facilitate the delivery of units containing the Indigenous cultural knowledge. NAILSMA will work with external partners to identify services for remote Indigenous students that support Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN), knowledge retention, job related skills and education and employment pathways.

NAILSMA will work closely with HEPPP-WCE partners including, Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Institute (BI), Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Education (ACIKE) and the Northern Territory Government (NTG) to identify synergies across other areas of the program and collaborate where appropriate.

5. Projected Project Outcomes
This project is the 2nd site piloting the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management (ILM) certification. With each site taking a different approach to pilot the delivery of the ILM, a comparative analysis of each sites local driven delivery methods and project outcomes will occur. We aim to identify and communicate the importance of local delivery and management methods across sites and are looking to find the continuities in framework design for the efficiencies of streamlining but remain flexible and able to be locally customised. This will enable streamlined intended outcomes as a result of the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program.
Projected project benefits for Yirrkala community members are:

- NAILSMA will work with RTOs to get Certificate III in ILM on scope and available for delivery in the NT in 2016
- Contribute to the development of a framework that identifies:
  - a best practise model for delivering Certificate III in ILM
  - an employment strategy for RTOs to employ local senior people to lead or co-facilitate the delivery of units containing the recognition of Indigenous cultural knowledge
  - an engagement and participation strategy for communities to work with RTOs delivering ILM and for RTOs to engage more effectively with communities to achieve desired outcomes through higher learning pathways
- Identify career and education pathways for students participating in the Certificate III in ILM
- Produce a final report on the project implementation and outcomes
- Produce communications materials to explain education and career pathway opportunities

Yirrkala Project Delivery and Outcomes

It was originally identified that a subset of units from four different nationally accredited qualifications, including; *Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management, Certificate III in Aboriginal Sites Work, and Certificate II, IV in Indigenous Leadership,* and *AHCSS00013 Report on Aboriginal Cultural Sites Skill Set* be trialled to determine the suitability and cultural relevance of these VET units not currently available in the Northern Territory.

By the time the project was identified and agreed on by community members, the pilot would go for just over a year, which was not enough time to sufficiently trial each of these different units. Therefore, it was decided that Yirrkala and Maningrida trial the *Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management* due to its close alignment to the Conservation and Land Management Certification that is currently available in most communities and is also generally the required training of Indigenous Rangers and land and sea managers.

The Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management has six units that specifically recognise Indigenous knowledge in a nationally accredited western framework, these units are identified in the below table.

These units can not only be delivered as part of an Indigenous Land Management Certificate, but also as part of the Conservation Land Management Certification and as elective units for a range of other VET certificates. As the Indigenous Land Management Certificate III was not on scope with any RTO in NT at the beginning of the trial, it was identified that working with both Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute during the trial was an important aspect of determining the future delivery of the Indigenous Land Management units.

During the pilot, it was important to determine what community members, including Traditional Owners and Elders thought about each of the ILM units and whether or not they thought the units were culturally appropriate. It was also important to enable community participants to identify the content, delivery and assessments methods of the Traditional Knowledge units. Independent VET trainers were engaged to work with community members and advise on the VET requirements of delivering and assessing units. Independent trainers, *Darwin Education and Training Services,* were
engaged in the project due to their experience with delivering various training in both Maningrida and Yirrkala for over a decade.

The Certificate III Indigenous Land Management traditional knowledge units include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Code</th>
<th>Unit Title</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| AHCILM302   | Provide appropriate information on cultural knowledge                      | - Maintenance of cultural knowledge by Indigenous people and if and how this knowledge may be provided to others  
- Investigate cultural knowledge in accordance with cultural protocols; between land features, seasons and spirituality; animals and resources used for medicine and food |
| AHCILM305   | Work with an Aboriginal Community or organisation                           | - Process of operating in an Aboriginal Community or organisation while demonstrating an awareness of Aboriginal identity, history and spirituality  |
| AHCILM306   | Follow Aboriginal cultural protocols                                       | - Protocols involved in Aboriginal culture, including the need to identify the appropriate person/s when approaching a Community and the cultural and social protocols associated with that task. |
| AHCILM308   | Identify traditional customs and land rights for an Indigenous Community    | - Use of traditional customs by Indigenous people in caring for country  
- Outline importance of native title rights and interests recognised under non-indigenous law |
| (previously AHCILM301A) |                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| SITTGDE001  | Interpret aspects of local Australian Indigenous culture                   | - Recognises that there is no single Australian Indigenous culture and emphasises the importance of local cultural knowledge, appropriate behaviour and local community consultation. |

Adding to scope:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Code</th>
<th>Unit Title</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM307</td>
<td>Implement Aboriginal cultural burning practices</td>
<td>- This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to use traditional Aboriginal controlled burning practices on Country to manage natural and cultural resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: The Certificate III Indigenous Land Management traditional knowledge units

Outcomes of the pilot study

The Certificate III Indigenous Land Management Indigenous knowledge units were piloted at two communities in NT, Maningrida and Yirrkala. Both pilots set out to identify if these units would be culturally relevant and provide training that was not currently available in communities. By trialling these units in both communities, we wanted to determine whether or not the units were broadly applicable, regardless of location, language spoken, age, or level of learners. In Maningrida we focused on the involvement of community elders including Traditional Owners living in Maningrida and on outstations or homelands, and senior Indigenous school staff and senior rangers. In Yirrkala we focused the pilot project around providing a more cultural appropriate training of Indigenous
Rangers, from an on-the-job training and required skills perspective to the inclusion of cultural appropriate training and learning methods. The workshops also included the participation of Yirrkala Rangers, which included the participation of young rangers, senior rangers and cultural advisors and Traditional Owners from each location the workshops were held. There were much larger numbers of participants at workshops in the Yirrkala region, but the delivery of workshops followed the same method. Further comparisons between the two sites are provided later in the report.

The pilot project workshops took place in various homelands across the Laynhapuy IPA were the Yirrkala Rangers are responsible for helping to manage country. Workshop locations were chosen by participants and usually based on the time of year and what could be done on that homeland and a mix of homelands inland and along the coast. Workshops were delivered in Yolŋu-Matha, the language generally spoken in this area of north-east Arnhem Land and lead by the Traditional Owners or senior Elders and rangers from that community. Workshop activities were recorded in Yolŋu-Matha and presentations were done in both Yolŋu-Matha and English.

Feedback from community participants has been received continuously throughout the pilot project. A series of interviews were conducted with workshop participants to determine what they thought of the training. All participants agreed that the training was interesting and different to other training. They liked being able to decide what topics the workshops would cover and learn about how traditional knowledge intersects with western knowledge and concepts and making sense of this. At the last workshop held in Yilpara, a senior cultural advisor stood up and said that the workshops, the way they are delivered and the information that they cover were in line with Yolŋu aspirations for visions and objects as per their plan “to determine our own future, to manage our own affairs and to become self-sufficient so the mala can continue to live in peace and harmony” (Yirrkala Rangers Business Plan 2013 – 2016, pg. 7).

Throughout the pilot project, the review and breakdown of each of the Indigenous Land Management units occurred to ensure that they were both culturally suitable and relevant to a range of participant’s education levels. The units have been identified as filling a gap in the western education sector by recognising Indigenous knowledge and modes of learning. Decisions about what would be taught for each unit were left up to Traditional Owners and community members. This meant that each unit focused on a different topic depending on who was present, what country the workshop was taking place and what people considered relevant or missing from other training. The delivery of these units on-country meant that Traditional Owners oversaw and determined the content and delivery methods of the training.

The development of training content by Traditional Owners, Elders or Custodians is crucial and must be followed as already indicated as a directed of the traditional knowledge units. Each unit states:

Assessment of this unit must be conducted by recognised and appropriate Community Elders and/or Custodians with appropriate assessor qualifications or co-assessed by a qualified assessor in cooperation and discussion with an appropriate Community Elders and/or Custodians.
This directive provides a strong and clear statement that the appropriate community Elders must assess or co-assess the delivery of these units. This also provides insurance that appropriate community members must remain the trainers and assessors of these units, identifying the content and methods of delivery well into the future. Therefore, the ongoing delivery of these units post pilot project will have a level of protection to ensure that they remain driven by community elders.

RTOs that take on the delivery of these units in the future will need to ensure that content and delivery of these units is done so with the community elders within communities. An ILM framework was also developed to capture the best practice methods used during the pilot project to develop unit content and delivery. This framework can be used as a guide to RTOs and other trainers delivering ILM units or similar.

The workshops also focus on identifying and strengthening leadership qualities within senior rangers, community members and cultural advisors to enhance their capabilities as trainers, leaders and mentors to other rangers and students.

Approximately 50 participants have been involved in the workshops including Elders, Traditional Owners, Cultural Advisors, Senior Rangers, Rangers and other community members.

**ILM Training Framework**

This pilot aimed to develop a culturally appropriate context for delivering units that recognise Traditional Ecological Knowledge in a western framework. The development of ILM Framework was to support the learning and delivery methods identified during each of the workshops. The Framework identifies the details of the processes that were followed during the pilot project. All workshops supported participants to refine, deliver, and assess nationally accredited units. This involved participants breaking down each of the unit elements, translating each one into their preferred language and subsequently developing a culturally appropriate learning framework that focuses on delivering nationally accredited training in first language and supporting Indigenous leaders to be trainers and training co-facilitators. The framework identifies the employment and engagement of senior local people as consultants and co-assessors to assist in the delivery of units, particularly those containing Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge.

The table below is a brief outlook on what the steps involved in the ILM training Framework.
The second part of this pilot was to work with VETiS students to Integrate the Certificate III in ILM Arnhem Land, including Maningrida and Yirrkala. The Learning on Country Program (LoCP) assist community members and partner organisations wanting to collect evidence for students to gain Recognised Prior Learning. The evidence collected during each of the workshops has been identified in the ILM Framework to be used towards the RPL process.

The evidence collected during each of the workshops has been identified in the ILM Framework to assist community members and partner organisations wanting to collect evidence for students to gain RPL in the future.

Integration of ILM in VET in Schools (VETiS) and Learning on Country Program (LoCP)
The second part of this pilot was to work with VETiS students to Integrate the Certificate III in ILM with the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF) or the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NT CET) where possible for the future benefit of the Learning on Country Program participants. The Learning on Country Program operates in five communities in north east Arnhem Land, including Maningrida and Yirrkala. The Learning on Country Program (LoCP)
incorporates the Australian Curriculum and Northern Territory Curriculum Framework outcomes with Conservation and Land Management units of competency under the direction of the visiting teachers and the Indigenous homeland centre teachers. The curriculum outcomes include: maths, science, English as a Second Language (ESL) Indigenous languages and culture. Another core consideration in the LoCP is the intergenerational knowledge transfer between the students, rangers and senior Yolŋu.

The pilot focused on upskilling Yirrkala rangers, and senior community members to who are involved in the Learning on Country (LOC) program as mentors to Yirrkala Homelands students. Through each of the workshops the participants were asked to think about the various topics and lessons that would want to teach young people if they were going to assist in the future delivery of the Indigenous Land Management traditional knowledge units to LOC students.

Workshops with Learning on Country students were scheduled as rangers and senior community members identified that the units were just as important for senior people to be involved in and that it would be better to have senior community members skilled in these units so that they can pass their knowledge on to school students in the future.

A pilot project proposal is being developed between NAILSMA and Batchelor to trial and deliver the ILM to VETiS students in 2017. Preliminary support has been indicated from the NT Department of Education and it is envisioned that 2015-2016 ILM trial participants will be involved in the delivery and assessment of these units.

**ILM is now on scope**

As a result of the pilot project, in June 2016, the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management was put on scope at Batchelor Institute. This certificate and specifically the Indigenous Knowledge units are now available throughout the NT. The formal delivery of this course will ensure that culturally appropriate education opportunities are available to regional and remote Indigenous learners and communities. NAILSMA continues to work with Batchelor Institute to deliver the ILM into the immediate future. NAILSMA will continue to review resources and methods of delivery and ensure that the appropriate community members continue to identify and drive the delivery of these units.

**Training Portfolios**

It has been identified early in the project that a number of adults undertaking remote VET training are enrolled in or have recently taken part in training that is lower than their highest qualification. For example, numerous participants who had completed a Certificate II in Conservation Land Management and should be doing training that is Certificate III level or higher, where being enrolled and trained in Certificate I and II units. There needs to be a system whereby the trainer is aware of their students’ previous learning history so they are not repeating units or enrolled in units lower than their last qualification. The Unique Student Identifier (USI) will assist in this, but only for students commencing study from 2015, any study prior is unlikely to be included in this database. Academic assessment records were sought for each student from CDU and Batchelor Institute to determine what training participants had been involved in to date. Conversations were held with individuals to identify what their education and career aspirations were and what training options were available to support these pathways. Training and development plans were given to each participant to provide a greater understanding about the level of training they are up to and assist
them to be in control of their training, and to safeguard against being continually enrolled in training that is below their qualification level or not relevant to their education and career aspirations.

**Maningrida and Yirrkala Pilot Project Workshops**
The table below shows the different activities and Indigenous knowledge that was covered during the pilot project workshops. The table represents the broad application of these units depending on participants present, location of workshop and topics of interest to each group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Maningrida</th>
<th>Yirrkala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM301A Propose appropriate uses of traditional customs</td>
<td>Engaged with a Native Title Lawyer to discuss land tenure and how Indigenous law intersects with Western law and making sense of that from each local context</td>
<td>Bush food, bush medicine and bush resources discussed and demonstrated through the spearing and preparation of a wallaby. Demonstrated how to cook it on the fire and how to cut it up traditional ways. Identified what each part of the wallaby was used for and how to prepare parts of the wallaby for eating, for medicine or for tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM302A Provide appropriate information on cultural knowledge</td>
<td>Bush food and bush medicine walk identifying and explaining plant use, preparation processes and seasonality of use</td>
<td>Bush food, bush medicine and bush resources discussed and demonstrated through the spearing and preparation of a wallaby. Demonstrated how to cook it on the fire and how to cut it up traditional ways. Identified what each part of the wallaby was used for and how to prepare parts of the wallaby for eating, for medicine or for tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITTGDE009A Interpret aspects of local Australian Indigenous culture</td>
<td>Visited the community art centre and discussed various art relevant to the individual, how knowledge is shared, who has the right to knowledge, etc</td>
<td>Acted out a ‘discipline lesson’ about people not respecting country and what happens. The role of Traditional Owners in making decisions about what happens if people disrespect country or if cultural protocols are not followed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM306 Follow Aboriginal cultural protocols</td>
<td>Planned a traditional hunting activity using traditional burning techniques to hunt small mammals</td>
<td>Based this unit around discussion on how to develop a problem baru management plan. Identifying the cultural protocols and correct processes that must be followed when discussing and dealing with problem crocodiles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHCILM307 Implement Aboriginal cultural burning practices</td>
<td>Continuation of the unit AHCILM306, Maningrida College Language and Culture teachers delivered part of this unit to Learning on Country and VETIS students. The students were learnt and participated in about a traditional burn for the purpose of hunting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Maningrida and Yirrkala Workshop activities comparison
Each of the activities identified above were chosen by the community participants at each workshop and the each of the workshops go towards accrediting each participant in their Certificate III studies, either specifically as part of a Cert III in Indigenous Land Management, or as an elective to other certifications. The variation in activities across sites demonstrates that the units are broadly applicable to different communities and community participants. The assessment process for each unit will take place under the guidance and assessment of an appropriate community member, as indicated in the above statement, who can identify if individuals have the skills and knowledge as required. For the assessment process and the evidence required for each student by RTOs, resources have been developed with observational assessment tasks and in line with RTO regulation and requirements, but also respectful to Indigenous methods of teaching and learning.

**Group Activities or Group Knowledge**

Most activities were delivered as a group. Indigenous knowledge was demonstrated to be of different levels depending on the individuals, their age, their kinship system, who’s country the activity was taking place and the cultural protocols associated with the activity or place. Hence during the activities, individuals had different roles to play within the group, and people would help each other out with each stage of the task that was identified. Indigenous knowledge is usually owned by a clan, a family, a kinship system, a totem group, a gender group, and rarely an individual person. Thus traditional western assessment methods of assessing the individual student in isolation to their peers is not a relevant method for assessing or teaching these units. Group activities were identified within each workshop and questions were discussed together in first language and then answered by group representatives.

**ILM VET Resources**

Certificate III Indigenous Land Management traditional knowledge VET Resources have been developed for use by Batchelor and NAILSMA in the future delivery of these units. As already indicated, the resources have been developed to follow a few key principles:

- The assessment process for each unit will take place under the guidance and assessment by an appropriate community member/s or Traditional Owners;
- Assessment tasks will be assessed by the assessor/s through a series of observations that are in line with RTO regulation and requirements; and
- Assessment activities will be identified by appropriate community members/Traditional Owners to ensure training and assessment methods are in accordance with cultural protocols.

Each of the six units have Assessors Guides, Learning Assessment Records and Study Guides. The resources have been developed to ASQA standards and have attempted to satisfy the requirements of the RTO as well as be responsive to the cultural requirements of Indigenous teaching and learning methods. NAILSMA, with input from community members, will continue to work with Batchelor Institute to fine tune VET unit resources as the units are delivered to more communities across the NT.

We envisage that these units will enable a large number of Indigenous land and sea managers to gain recognition for their cultural knowledge relevant to managing land and sea country. In addition, these units may also enable more VETiS students to complete Certificate III level studies with the
support and guidance of senior community members, and will also support pathways for remote
Indigenous learners to higher certificate levels.

**Challenges**
There were few challenges throughout the course of the pilot project. The project was supported by
community members ranging from organisations initially supporting a few staff to initially be
involved in the workshops to entire teams to being involved. The workshops had a cross-section of
participants throughout, as it is always a challenge to organise workshops times that suit
everybody’s availability and other commitments. Regardless we had a good turnout of participants
at each workshop and received good feedback throughout.

The greatest challenge for this project was working with RTOs towards getting the ILM on scope and
available as an accredited course in the NT. Initially discussion with both CDU and Batchelor Institute
were held to identify potential support. Both institutions were supportive in the early stages of the
project and a number of avenues were explored to ensure the culturally appropriate delivery of the
ILM post pilot project. Discussions with each RTO met its own challenges with changes in
management, questions of relevancy of the units and misunderstandings of how the delivery of
these types of units could possibly work across different communities with different cultural beliefs
and cultures and different methods of teaching and learning.

After numerous meetings and extensive discussion to identify an appropriate way for both the RTO
and community elders to continue to deliver these units, the Certificate III in ILM was put on scope
at Batchelor in June 2016.

**Future directions**
The Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management will continue to be delivered by NAILSMA in
partnership with Batchelor Institute in 2017 and beyond. A number of other interested groups
including schools with a VETiS program and ranger groups from across the NT would like to receive
training in 2017. Pilot project participants are in a position to work with trainers as co-assessors for
the ILM Indigenous knowledge units, which NAILSMA will continue to support.

**VETiS ILM for 2017**
NAILSMA will continue to work with both Maningrida and Yirrkala to deliver the ILM in collaboration
with Batchelor Institute. A project plan is being developed between to the two organisations to
deliver the ILM traditional knowledge units to VETiS students officially commencing in 2017.
Additional schools have expressed interest in being a part of this project. In Maningrida, community
elders involved in the ILM pilot project during 2015 and 2016 have been identified to deliver these
units to Maningrida College students.

A planning meeting is identified for early 2017 with all relevant parties to discuss how the ILM will
benefit students and assist towards graduating year 12.

**Other opportunities for ILM**
The Indigenous Land Management Certificate traditional knowledge units cover broad aspects of
culture knowledge and protocols such as:
The Indigenous Land Management Certificate traditional knowledge units cover broad aspects of Indigenous knowledge and protocols such as:

- Maintenance of cultural knowledge by Indigenous people and if and how this knowledge may be provided to others
- Process of operating in an Aboriginal Community or organisation while demonstrating an awareness of Aboriginal identity, history and spirituality
- Protocols involved in Aboriginal culture, including the need to identify the appropriate person/s when approaching a Community and the cultural and social protocols associated
- Recognises that there is no single Australian Indigenous culture and emphasises the importance of local cultural knowledge, appropriate behaviour and local community consultation.

These concepts are widely applicable to working with and in Indigenous communities. Although the unit is a Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management, the units could be applicable to Indigenous health, education, leadership and business enterprises. This training is directed by community Elders, therefore the topics covered are relevant to community members and could discuss cultural protocols and concepts across a number of areas. A number of other Indigenous communities and Indigenous organisations have indicated their interest in receiving ILM training to support future generations to have more opportunities to learn traditional and cultural knowledge and methods of learning. Elliott and Gunbalanya community members are two communities within the HEPPP-WCE initiative that have expressed interest.

**Other VET pathways**

Similar work could be done to look into the validity and cultural relevance of other VET certificates such as the *Certificate III in Aboriginal Sites Work, and Certificate II, IV in Indigenous Leadership*. Although these units were not looked into during this project due to time and funding constraints of the project, they are of interest. VET is an alternative training and education pathway for remote learners wanting to further their learning, and is increasingly offered in remote schools as an alternative to a standard ‘academic’ pathway; therefore, more work to support culturally appropriate VET certificates and delivery would be beneficial.
Tennant Creek / Elliott

Tennant Creek Project Management Plan

1. Background

Discussions have been held with community members, local rangers groups, land councils, government organisations, service providers, and other community organisations within Tennant Creek indicating there is insufficient support for training and further education opportunities for secondary and post-secondary students within the region.

Batchelor Institute and Charles Darwin University have campuses/offices in Tennant Creek and deliver a range of training and higher education courses in the region, however it has been pointed out that communication/advertising of available courses for people wanting to access these opportunities is relatively ineffective, particularly in the hinterland. Within the Tennant/Barkley region, there are number of communities that miss out on training and education to enable them to access potential higher level employment opportunities in, for example, Government services, environmental services, heritage protection and private enterprise.

Tennant Creek is the largest service town in the region and Elliott, to the north, is the next service town, though significantly smaller. Indigenous populations in these two centres are demographically significant. Apart from the traditional owners/Native Title groups of the town areas, the majority of Aboriginal people living here are dispossessed of customary lands in the broader region through the advent of pastoralism and or are drawn into these centres for access to services etc. Some small groups (usually extended families) have been successful in securing portions of customary land under freehold title on pastoral leases, known as Community Living Areas (CLAs), or as small Land Trusts under the Aboriginal Land Rights Agreement (ALRA), such as Marlinja. For these groups Tennant Creek and Elliott are relied upon as the main service centres, as the local services including education, training, employment, health, mechanical, etc, are very limited.

Immediate employment opportunities in the towns and region are limited, but particularly so for Aboriginal people who are in a western sense ‘unskilled’ or ‘partially skilled’. There are opportunities in land and environmental management through local ranger groups (Tennant only) that would be at or near full capacity given their dependence on Government funding such as Working On Country (WOC) and or other government support.

Pastoral industry

In the region there are job opportunities in the pastoral industry. These are mostly for men, and are seasonal and insecure employment. Importantly, education and training must be geared towards these, and other, job opportunities in these employment sectors.

Many Aboriginal people were involved in cattle industry droving before it was made redundant by trucking and fenced paddock based pastoral management. Still today Aboriginal stockmen are key to the industry in this and other regions but they no longer have the same access to traditional lands, they are not able to provide the same access for their families and kids, there is little loyalty or security in seasonal pastoral employment for most pastoral workers today. There may be opportunities to improve the level and scope of employment in the pastoral industry through targeted education and training. This will involve an improved level of engagement with pastoral
business owners and managers along with (particularly in situ) Indigenous labourers to better target, design and ensure access to training.

**Aboriginal Enterprises**

There is also scope for Aboriginal enterprise (self) employment, of which there are several examples in the region, including roadside slashing contracts, mustering, fencing contractors, etc. Targeted education and training can add value to these and help expand and secure these kinds of businesses and employment. There are also employment and livelihood opportunities that may be developed in the region that use unique local and traditional knowledge and skill. Aboriginal art and tourism are examples of this. Ecosystem services and carbon farming on marginal pastoral land is being explored in several pilot areas across the north of Australia including the eastern Barkly. Waanyi-Garrawa rangers have been doing fire management on the Nicholson block with a view to trading carbon over the last 8 years with the assistance of the Northern Land Council (NLC) and WOC. Education and training in both local/traditional knowledge and appropriate western style knowledge is critical to this innovative form of economic development and should be considered in the context of this HEPPP project for relevant Barkly and Murrangi region groups.

2. Project

Discussions with community members and organisation representatives have identified a number of areas that could be supported in this region and give young people and adults the chance to further their education to link in with existing and prospective employment and business opportunities. Some of these areas requiring support include:

- Training and education needs for local Indigenous owned businesses, such as fencing contract services and contract mustering
- Heritage site conservation and management.
- Environmental and cultural management of tourism sites such as lake woods
- Environmental services for railway and roadside maintenance – shoulder slashing

3. Project Objectives

- Identify and map out business, employment and livelihood opportunities in Tennant, Elliot and Barkly region, including the pastoral industry, small business enterprises and environmental services
- Based on the outcomes of the mapping exercise, training will be matched to locally specific needs, including identifying school leavers and adults interests and job/training pathways
- Facilitate conversations with potential employers (e.g. pastoralists, town business) about specific employee and traineeship opportunities
- Facilitate appropriate two-way communications strategy to improve the flow and quality of information about training and employment opportunities and needs to community members in the Tennant/Barkly regions

4. Community involvement

Engagement with relevant Indigenous community members is key to the success of this pilot project. The details of local course content, delivery methods, and evaluation will be driven by locally identified community members. NAILSMA will work closely with community members to identify opportunities for people to participate in training, education and employment relevant to current
needs. It is also critical to engage with local pastoral lease owners and managers and other current and prospective employers so that education and training is targeted and not irrelevant.

As identified above, there are a few Indigenous owned businesses operating in the Tennant/Barkley region that are looking for support to expand their businesses and enable them to offer pathways to young people. This will see NAILSMA directly engaged with community members in order to identify targeted training and education requirements.

5. External Partners
NAILSMA will work closely with HEPPP-WCE partners including, Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Institute (BI), Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Education (ACIKE) and the Northern Territory Government (NTG) to identify synergies across other areas of the program and collaborate where appropriate.

NAILSMA will work with external partners to identify services for remote Indigenous students that support Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN), knowledge retention, job related skills and education and employment pathways.

Other external partners include:
- Department of Business – Training NT
- Group Training Northern Territory
- Rangers
- Northern Land Council
- Central Land Council
- Julalikari Resource Centre

Tennant Creek / Elliott Project Delivery and Outcomes
In mid-2015, community members and organisation representatives in the Tennant Creek region suggested that NAILSMA focus on supporting and creating education opportunities in the remote and very remote communities of the Tennant Creek region (e.g. Elliott, Corella Creek and Rocky Downs) as there are Indigenous-owned businesses (and business opportunities) in these locations without identified pathways for Indigenous youth to access training. Through consultation with project partners, community members, and Indigenous businesses, NAILSMA was directed to focus on Elliott. NAILSMA then worked with Elliott community members and Traditional Owners to identify a project focus: developing a Whole of Country plan for Ijibarda (Longreach Waterhole). This is a significant conservation area of unmanaged high public use that is of serious concern to the (non-exclusive) Native Title holders/Traditional Owners. Community members are also concerned about the lack of opportunities for their young people returning to Elliott and other regional towns after completing their schooling. The education and support services based in Tennant are, according to local respondents, not being received in the Elliott region and in some cases businesses are contracting RTO trainers from interstate to deliver training. NAILSMA’s work in the Tennant Creek region, then, included the following activities:

1. Developing a Whole of Country Plan with Ijibarda Traditional Owners (TOs)
2. Supporting training pathways for an Indigenous land management business in Elliott, Triple P Contracting Pty Ltd
3. Working with Tennant Creek High School to support pathways in land management for Indigenous high school students.
1. Developing a Whole of Country Plan with Ijibarda Traditional Owners
A Whole of Country Plan sets out the goals and aspirations of the TOs for their country and community, and identifies strategies for achieving those goals. It takes a holistic approach to planning, and situates formal education and training as a part of, and as a strategy for achieving, the broader goals of TOs to care for country and create positive changes in their communities. This approach ensures that formal education and training are contextualised and meaningful (rather than ‘training for training’s sake’), and that the pathways to higher education that are identified and developed align with the priorities, concerns, and interests of TOs. In addition, the process of creating a plan creates informal education and networking opportunities that are inherently valuable, and support the long term sustainability of the project outcomes.

Process
NAILSMA facilitated regular workshops with Ijibarda Traditional Owners to develop the Whole of Country plan from December 2015 to September 2016. Workshops and meetings were held at various locations as appropriate; these included Ijibarda (Longreach Waterhole), Elliott Recreation Centre, Elliott Library, Darwin, and at the homes of TOs in Elliott and Tennant Creek (see photos below).

The workshops were participatory and focussed on supporting TOs to describe, share, and discuss their goals and ideas for Ijibarda. Initial workshops focussed on brainstorming ideas, identifying information needed, and sharing new information acquired. The following workshops tended to focus on developing consensus around the vision and strategies to achieve it. The final workshops focussed on reading, discussing, and checking the draft plan. At some workshops TOs would take a lead role in presenting information and leading the discussion, at others NAILSMA staff would
present information and seek feedback. Notes from workshops were always recorded on butcher’s paper (see photos above).

2. Supporting training pathways for an Indigenous land management business in Elliott, Triple P Contracting Pty Ltd

Triple P Contracting is an Indigenous business based in Elliott that employs local Indigenous community members. NAILSMA’s involvement with Triple P Contracting has focused on providing training and support for staff members to use I-Tracker. I-Tracker, short for Indigenous Tracker, is a program that helps Indigenous Land and Sea Managers work together to collect and manage information across north Australia. Using CyberTracker software, I-Tracker digital applications can be downloaded onto a hand-held computer with GPS, camera, voice recording functions. These can record data about land management services electronically. This data is then downloaded to their office computers, where the information can be viewed on a map and used to create reports for future planning and management practices. NAILSMA ran I-Tracker training with Triple P staff and Traditional Owners in April 2016, and has continued to provide support to Triple P.

3. Working with Tennant Creek High School to support pathways in land management for Indigenous high school students

Tennant Creek High School (TCHS) senior students travel to Darwin annually to attend the CDU open day, and visit a range of potential employment or training options. This year the TCHS students also visited NAILSMA. NAILSMA staff gave presentations about various projects we are involved in, and described our own education pathways, provided information about various education pathways in land and sea management, and introduced I-Tracker and did an activity. TCHS staff reported that the students enjoyed the opportunity, and are interested in continuing to include NAILSMA in their annual trips as land management is a real career pathway for some of their students.

The whole of country plan for Ijibarda (Longreach Waterhole) provides an outline of the Traditional Owner’s vision for their country, and their goals; it also sets out strategies for achieving these goals. However, there were many smaller successes and learning opportunities through the process of developing the Whole of Country Plan. For example, 6 Traditional Owners participated in a Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management workshop trialling a Native Title Unit with rangers and TOs from Yirrkala and Maningrida that NAILSMA hosted in Darwin. Through this experience, the TOs learned about Native Title legislation and how it is applied to their country, and were then able to share this knowledge with other TOs in Elliott at subsequent planning workshops. Similarly, through visiting the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority in Darwin, the TOs learned about how sacred sites can be protected and how the relevant legislation works, and the crucial difference between recorded and registered sites. This information has been shared with other TOs through planning workshop, and led to TOs applying to register their sacred sites this year. Additionally, visiting Darwin and meeting with a number of organisations throughout this year, has helped the TOs to learn about other organisations that can support their vision, and to build links with other Indigenous organisations, such as the Djelk Rangers from Maningrida.

Throughout this process, the importance of education and training has been a key theme. Through visiting Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute, and meeting with lecturers and support staff, TOs were able to learn about of the requirements for running courses (e.g., that 10-15
students are needed), the range of courses that are available, and how different skillsets (e.g., business, conservation land management, mechanics etc.) are each important for caring for country and running a ranger group.

**Challenges**

- Achieving the TOs vision for Ijibarda will require relationship building and close collaboration with other stakeholders, in particular, the pastoralist. Negotiating and strengthening these relationships is key to progressing.
- Although there is much interest and enthusiasm to study among TOs (e.g., a Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management, or Horticulture), ensuring that there are more than 10 students to enrol in each course, and that all students are able to leave Elliott for a number of weeks, remains challenging. It is hoped that collaboration between the RJCP program in Elliott, NT Department of Business (Training), and Batchelor Institute may help to address this issue.

**Future directions**

- For the Ijibarda TOs, implementing their plan and realising their vision is the main goal moving forward. This is made up of many smaller goals, such as connecting with key stakeholders, doing training at Batchelor Institute, developing a business plan and seeking funding.
- NAILSMA has identified potential partners during the project that may be able to assist Ijibarda TOs to apply for funding grants to assist in the implementation of their plan.
- There is potential for Ijibarda TOs to connect with existing ranger groups to learn about ranger work, and to undertake Certificate III in ILM units to support cultural learning.
- Based on the good relationships built with Triple P Contracting and Tennant Creek High School (TCHS) through this project, NAILSMA is also well placed to continue supporting I-Tracker use and training with Triple P, and to contribute to the TCHS annual visits to Darwin.
- Elliott community members have also expressed interest in having the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management being delivered to community members in 2017. They have expressed the difficulties in younger generations having opportunities to learn and practice their cultural and traditional knowledge and see this type of training as an opportunity to do so.
Yuendumu

Yuendumu Project Management Plan

1. Project Overview
The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance Ltd (NAILSMA) has been engaged by the Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership (OPVC-IL) of Charles Darwin University (CDU) to work with six remote Indigenous communities across the Northern Territory as part of the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program – Whole of Community Engagement initiative (HEPPP-WCE).

NAILSMA was engaged as an expert organisation in the Indigenous land and sea management sector to identify opportunities for remote Indigenous students and adult learners to participate in higher education, specifically related to land and sea management. NAILSMA is able to value add to land and sea management based activities to achieve employment-ready training and higher education participation outcomes including improved numeracy and literacy, attendance, and higher education pathways, with a focus on local control and traditional knowledge systems.

2. Background
Discussions have been held with community members, local rangers, land council, government organisations, service providers, and other community organisations within Yuendumu to identify projects that support students and adults access further education in the land and sea management sector. The projects will be a critical tool for community group participation, provide immediate local outcomes and offer opportunities to explore related further education pathways in a practical setting that incorporates local and traditional knowledge as a foundation for confidence and learning in a mainstream context.

Yuendumu is the largest remote community in Central Australia. Located 300kms north west of Alice Springs. It has a population of between 800-1000 people. The population of mostly Warlpiri speaking people is located on the eastern edge of Anmatyerr country. Yuendumu is located within the Yuendumu Aboriginal Lands Trust area, which includes numerous outstations, though most suffer from lack of services and issues with distance, water, sustainable natural harvest etc. Yuendumu retains links with other Warlpiri communities within the region, including Lajamanu, Willowra and Nyirripi (PAW media, URL: http://www.pawmedia.com.au) and with many other communities over a vast area in central Australia.

Yuendumu services the Southern Tanami Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) which spans some 101,000 square kilometres comprising of vast spinifex sand plains, broad paleo-drainage (ancient river) channels and low rocky ranges. The Southern Tanami Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) covers the southern portion of the Tanami Desert and its traditional owners live at Yuendumu, Nyirripi and Willowra.

The wetlands in this area take in the Lander River system and its associated swamps and waterholes, botanically important paleodrainage (ancient river) systems and many small soakages and rockholes. It includes Yinapaka (Lake Surprise), a culturally significant site which is included on the Directory of Important Wetlands of Australia. This lake is considered to be in near pristine condition and, when
I botanically important paleodrainage (ancient river) systems and many small soakages and rockholes. The wetlands in this area take in the Lander River system and its associated swamps and waterholes, Willowra. The southern portion of the Tanami Desert and its traditional owners live at Yuendumu, Nyirripi channels and low rocky ranges. The Southern Tanami Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) covers the square kilometres compris

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Yuendumu Aboriginal Lan

people is located on the eastern edge of Anmatyerr country. Yuendumu is located within the

Springs. It has a population of between 800

Yuendumu is the largest remote community in Central Aust

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full, is the largest body of fresh water in the Tanami Desert. It is known to provide important habitat for waterbirds and fish. Another large saline lake systems, Lake MacKay also occurs within the proposed IPA, and have international significance as episodic breeding grounds for wetland bird species protected under international treaties (CLC, URL: www.clc.org.au).

Bilingual Education

Yuendumu residents and school council have been unyielding promoters of bilingual education, both through the school (often despite Education department policy settings) and through all other community activities (again often despite cross-cultural issues with non-Warlpiri project delivery. For example, Warlpiri Media, now PAW, started by community members on 1.4 1986 to create local television and radio programs for the community and school in Warlpiri language). Bi-lingual education is seen as a cornerstone providing a foundation for further learning. There are many resources (human, written, multi-media and other) for project managers and proponents to access for Warlpiri and bi-lingual language support in project delivery and outcomes.

3. Project

Discussions with community members and organisation representatives have identified a number of areas that could be supported in Yuendumu to give young people and adults the chance to further their education and link in with existing and prospective employment and business opportunities. Higher education is also very much about traditional and local knowledge focused on links to country in the near vicinity and wider region. There are a number of project ideas that have been discussed that NAILSMA could support through this project.

Project ideas have been developed into briefs and discussed in various informal sessions with community, members. Initial scoping to develop potential synergies with other project areas and to identify priorities according to best expected outcomes have commenced.

The project briefs are provided below and once project areas are confirmed, relevant pathways will be identified into specialist fields such as Ornithology, Anthropology, Heritage Management and Spatial data collection and analysis. Importantly, cultural learning pathways are a paramount consideration in project choice, management and delivery and rely on local control. The project areas of interest include:

- support and development of a bilingual Warlpiri Bird Dictionary and I-Tracker desert bird sequence;
- support and development a bilingual Warlpiri Country Seasonal Calendar; and
- Spatial and anthropological mapping of the Jukurrpa and association with ancestors, to be identified and sourced through local and national archives/image collections.

**Potential Project: Warlpiri Bird Dictionary**

A proposed collaboration between the Yuendumu School Bilingual Resources Development Unit (BRDU), Linguist, Anthropologist, the Yuendumu School Council, PAW Media and the Warlpiri Rangers has been promoted. This collaboration would seek to employ local senior people to collect Indigenous cultural knowledge about local birds and create an identification resource for schools and ranger programs in Warlpiri and English language.
**Potential Project: Desert Bird I-Tracker Sequence**
Description: A proposed collaboration between the Yuendumu school Bilingual Resources Development Unit (BRDU), PAW media and Warlpiri Rangers to employ local senior people to collect Indigenous cultural knowledge about local desert birds and associated knowledge and create an I-Tracker sequence for use by local and more distant desert ranger programs.

**Potential Project: Warlpiri Country Seasonal Calendar**
Description: A proposed collaboration between the Yuendumu School Bilingual Resources Development Unit (BRDU), PAW media and Warlpiri Rangers to employ local senior people to collect Indigenous cultural knowledge about seasons. Such information could be used to create a ‘Seasonal Calendar’ for schools and regional ranger programs.

**Potential Project: Mapping the Jukurrpa**
Description: A proposed collaboration between the Warlukurlangu Aboriginal Artists Association, Yuendumu school Bilingual Resources Development Unit (BRDU), PAW media, to create correlate, map and record in a multimedia format a Jukurrpa stories across the Warlpiri Landscape, drawn from the Warlukurlangu archives of paintings and stories and other sources.

**Potential Project: Pictures of the Old People**
Description: A proposed collaboration between PAW media, Warlpiri Rangers, and elders to organise excursions to museums with senior rangers and knowledge holders to recover pictures of old people and re-create a photographic and multimedia historical record for schools and rangers. Such a multimedia record will assist in bringing historical and familial information forward into the contemporary land management and learning context. This record/resource will provide important social and familial context to the inter-generational transmission and use of traditional knowledge, connected to place.

4. Project Objectives
   - Identify and map out projects to pinpoint the communities interest
   - Based on the outcomes of the mapping exercise, training will be matched to locally specific needs, including identifying school leavers and adults interests and job/training pathways
   - Facilitate conversations with potential employers (e.g. pastoralists, town business) about specific employee and traineeship opportunities
   - Facilitate appropriate two-way communications strategy to improve the flow and quality of information about training and employment opportunities and needs to community members in Yuendumu

- Community involvement
Engagement with relevant Indigenous community members is key to the success of this pilot project. The details of local course content, delivery methods, and evaluation will be driven by locally identified community members. NAILSMA will work closely with community members to identify opportunities for people to participate in training, education and employment relevant to current needs. It is also critical to engage with local pastoral lease owners and managers and other current and prospective employers so that education and training is targeted and not irrelevant.
NAILSMA will directly engage with community members in order to identify targeted training and education requirements. Project Partners include:

- Yuendumu school Bilingual Resources Development Unit (BRDU)
- Linguists
- Anthropologists
- Yuendumu School Council
- PAW Media
- Warlpiri Rangers

**External Partners**

NAILSMA will work closely with HEPPP-WCE partners including, Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Institute (BI), Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Education (ACIKE) and the Northern Territory Government (NTG) to identify synergies across other areas of the program and collaborate where appropriate.

NAILSMA will work with external partners to identify services for remote Indigenous students that support Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN), knowledge retention, job related skills and education and employment pathways.

Other external partners include:

- Department of Business – Training NT
- Group Training Northern Territory
- Central Land Council
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Birdlife Australia

**Yuendumu Project Delivery and Outcomes**

From the range of projects identified in the Project Management Plan, further meetings were held to determine the project areas that could be supported. NAILSMA was directed by senior community members to focus on supporting the development of resources about Warlpiri birds. This builds on previous work done by the Bilingual Resource Development Unit (BRDU) at Yuendumu School, and supports the development of resources that can be used by Yuendumu school, rangers, community members, and by other schools with Warlpiri-speaking students. NAILSMA collaborated closely with the BRDU at Yuendumu School throughout this project, and was guided by senior elders at Yuendumu. This project created opportunities to share cultural knowledge and scientific knowledge about birds, and to develop bilingual and Warlpiri resources about birds that can be used by school students and community members. It emphasises the value of both knowledges, and the potential learning that come from bringing both Warlpiri and scientific knowledges about birds together. The resources themselves can be used to encourage learning about birds, but also to support literacy skills in both Warlpiri and English. Notably, this project also highlights education pathways and jobs that draw on both Warlpiri and Western knowledges, such as translation, education resource development, scientific research (particularly, ornithology). Therefore, this project sought to develop resources that can be used, and built upon, to support bilingual education about Warlpiri birds in schools and communities, and to highlight career pathways related to wildlife and bilingual/bicultural knowledges and skills.
The project involved:

1. Working with rangers, the BRDU, and senior community members to visit Newhaven Bird Sanctuary to observe birds and share and record stories about birds.
2. Creating a range of resources about Warlpiri birds that can be used in classrooms:
   a. Jurlpu Wardikinpirri-wana - Warlpiri Bird Dictionary
   b. Posters about Warlpiri birds and their habitats
   c. A Warlpiri birds I-Tracker Application

As part of the Warlpiri Bird Dictionary project, NAILSMA partnered with Yuendumu School Bilingual Resources Development Unit (BRDU) and the Yuendumu and Nyirrpi Rangers to deliver an on-country workshop to Newhaven Sanctuary to record songs, stories and photographs of birds. The trip focused on bringing together old and young people on country to share knowledge about cultural responsibilities community members have for look after country. During the trip 34 bird species that had not previously been identified in the existing dictionary, Jurlpu kuja karlipa nyanyi Yurntumu-wana (Warlpiri Bird Dictionary; Yuendumu BRDU and Central Land Council) were recorded, with information and stories in both Warlpiri and English.

The development of resources that can be used at Yuendumu School and in Yuendumu more broadly, as well as in other Warlpiri-speaking communities is also an important outcome from this project. NAILSMA and the BRDU were able to collaborate to develop these resources, and to bring together the different skills and knowledges to create interactive and relevant education resources.

Jurlpu Wardikinpirri-wana - Warlpiri Bird Book and Habitat Posters
A report and bird reference book was developed by the Yuendumu School Bilingual Resources Development Unit (BRDU) in collaboration with NAILSMA as a record of the Newhaven Sanctuary bush trip. During the trip 34 bird species that had not previously been identified in the existing dictionary, Jurlpu kuja karlipa nyanyi Yurntumu-wana (Warlpiri Bird Dictionary; Yuendumu BRDU and Central Land Council) were recorded, with information and stories in both Warlpiri and English. Bird habitat posters were also developed with this information, showing what birds can be found in different habitats.

I-Tracker Warlpiri Bird Application
The I-Tracker application, in particular, will provide an interactive tool that supports literacy skill development and learning in both English and Warlpiri, supports learners to engage with knowledge about birds digitally, and also allows learners to record extra information or stories about the birds in their communities and homelands.

Challenges
- Developing education resources, and in particular, the I-Tracker application, requires information about birds and that this information is confirmed as correct and appropriate to be shared, as well as many photos, audio clips and translations.
- This project built upon an existing Warlpiri Bird Dictionary, and added information about new species. Initially we had hoped to facilitate more than one trip to collect information and stories about more bird species in other habitats. This was not possible during this project; however,
The project involved:

1. Working with rangers, the BRDU, and senior community members to visit Newhaven Bird Sanctuary to observe birds and share and record stories about birds.

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Challenges

- Developing education resources, and in particular, the I-Tracker application, requires information about birds and that this information is confirmed as correct and appropriate to be shared, as well as many photos, audio clips and translations.
- This project built upon an existing Warlpiri Bird Dictionary, and added information about new species. Initially we had hoped to facilitate more than one trip to collect information and stories about more bird species in other habitats. This was not possible during this project; however, hosting additional trips to other habitats to collect information and develop resources about other species would be an obvious next step.

Future directions

- Moving forward, it would be good to support school staff to use the Warlpiri bird resources – in particular, the I-Tracker Application. It would also be useful to consider the various ways in which these resources are used in the school and community to strengthen bilingual resource development.
- Seeking funding for additional trips to other habitats to collect information about additional bird species would enable a more complete set of resources about Warlpiri birds, and ensure that the resources can be used by all Warlpiri-speaking schools and communities.
- It may also be useful to explore the possibility of adapting these resources to support ranger training and work in Warlpiri-speaking areas.
Galiwin’ku

Galiwin’ku Project Management Plan

1. Project Overview
The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance Ltd (NAILSMA) has been engaged by the Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership (OPVC-IL) of Charles Darwin University (CDU) to work with six remote Indigenous communities across the Northern Territory as part of the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program – Whole of Community Engagement initiative (HEPPP-WCE).

NAILSMA was engaged as an expert organisation in the Indigenous land and sea management sector to identify opportunities for remote Indigenous students and adult learners to participate in higher education, specifically related to land and sea management. NAILSMA land and sea management based activities appeal strongly to engagement with employment-ready training and higher education participation outcomes including improved numeracy and literacy in language and in English, better attendance, and links to higher education pathways.

NAILSMA’s component of HEPPP-WCE builds on our existing program of work and network of relationships with Indigenous communities engaged in land and sea management and will identify and work with existing programs, utilising existing partnerships with organisations operating in the Galiwin’ku community.

2. Background
Initial discussions have been held with community members, local ranger groups, service providers, and other community organisations to identify areas that can be supported through the HEPPP-WCE initiative to enhance opportunities for community members to participate in higher education.

Community scoping workshops identified two broad barriers to adult participation in both higher education and employment in environmental management activities. These were low literacy and numeracy in Western styles and the enduring disincentive of a lack of formal recognition of Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge.

NAILSMA uses land and sea management based activities as an attraction and engagement tool to achieve employment-ready training and higher education participation outcomes including improved numeracy and literacy, attendance, and higher education pathways. In light of barriers to higher education and employment

In Galiwin’ku NAILSMA has consulted with community members and community organisations to generate activity plans that will value existing cultural and ecological knowledge and incentivise practical literacy and numeracy, linked to explicit Higher Education pathways.

3. Project plan
The project is designed to:

- Get old people and young people together on country to maximise opportunities for the transmission of intergenerational knowledge;
- Link school esseNTial Learnings component of the NT Curriculum Framework (NTCF) teaching and learning cycle Rich Focus Units with Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (IEK),
4. Method

After scoping studies and preliminary meetings with community knowledge holders and relevant local organisations activities were identified that could be supported by NAILSMA through the Whole of Community Engagement initiative (HEPPP-WCE). Coordination and communications with community members, trainers, teachers and participants was assisted by the LOC co-ordinator.

LOC and regular school teachers from Shepherdson College and the Gäwa Homeland School conceived of a series of lessons around the theme of the near shore environment. The primary focus of the multiple class/age/lesson plan was a number of excursions to various near shores (intertidal zone) around the island already familiar to the students, knowledge holders and Rangers. These activities were discussed with NAILSMA. NAILSMA then developed a project plan based on community aspirations and interests and linked to opportunities in higher education.

The activity requires Students of Shepherdson and Gäwa, Rangers, and Knowledge holders to participate in a survey of the reef on the low tide of the full moon on March 18th, May 19th, and possibly again on the 2nd of June. Following this, further survey work will be identified for later in the year and into 2016. The education pathways this activity promotes will require students to engage with the teaching and learning cycle Rich Focus Units from the esseNTial Learnings component of the NT Curriculum Framework (NTCF) and the Learning on Country (LOC) framework.

Students will conduct a study to identify animals and plants within the intertidal zone, taking photographs and collecting data with a newly developed i-Tracker digital data application and data sheets to use for analysis. $1m^2$ frames are placed at 5m intervals along a 50m transect. The resulting data will be correlated and analysed for a number of tasks within multiple learning frameworks including English and Science. This school based program engages students, rangers and senior
knowledge holders in a number of interlocking roles, to identify animals, ecological zones, significance of ranger work, associated employment pathways, literacy and numeracy issues, and the intergenerational transfer of Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (IEK) and the significance of intergenerational interactions on country for Yolŋu.

Education pathway of the activities is the teaching and learning cycle Rich Focus Units. The content and skills of the activity target the prescribed outcomes from the esseNTial Learnings component of the NT Curriculum Framework (NTCF) and outcomes from the Indigenous Languages and Culture component. This focuses on developing the English literacy and oracy of students at different stages of development along the ESL learning continuum.

Associated with this rich focus activity are the teaching/learning strategies derived from the Learning On Country vision statement that enable students to practice targeted skills and to demonstrate outcomes from a range of Junior, Senior Secondary and Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses focused on Indigenous land and sea management.

Flowing naturally from the rich junior, secondary and VET learnings are explicit connections for all participants to further their higher education aspirations and participation. Communications outputs will be developed with community participants to show the progression of pathways from acquiring targeted skills to further education opportunities in language, land and sea management, marine sciences, administration, biology, health and much more.

5. Community involvement
Community participation has been the key element in developing culturally appropriate activities. Senior community knowledge holders have directed community members to work with selected activities trainers and students/participants.

Key community partners include:

- Marthakal Rangers
  - Senior rangers have been identified to participate in the workshops
- Senior community elders
  - A number of representative senior members have been identified to participate in the workshops and to assist in the delivery of the workshop content
- Yaludjakakunhamirri center – Community Young Women’s Knowledge Project
  - Yalu program participants engage with students and rangers
  - Red Cross and the ‘Stronger Communities for Children’ project
- Gäwa – Gurruwilingu Yolŋu Homelands School
  - Family and friends of the Homelands school children and surrounding community
- Shepherdson College -Through the engagement of various programs within the school
  - Learning on Country Program (LOC) and the Young Indigenous Leadership Program

6. External Partners
NAILSMA will work closely with HEPPP-WCE partners including, Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Institute (BI), Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Education (ACIKE) and the Northern Territory Government (NTG) to identify synergies across other areas of the program and collaborate where appropriate. Other identified NAILSMA HEPPP-WCE partners and collaborators will include:

- Northern Land Council (NLC);
- Northern Territory Government (NTG) Department of Education;
- Museums and Art Galleries of the NT, Dr Richard Willan;

### Potential Collaborators for Education Resources

- Centre for Aboriginal Economic and Policy Research (CAEPR);
- Belinda Oliver, Six Seasons cartography;
- Photographer- David Hancock;
- Designer- Therese Ritchie;

Other partners may be identified throughout the project and will be approached to collaborate where appropriate.

### 7. Project Outcomes

Project has a number of benefits for participants including a framework that identifies:

- links between Indigenous aspirations for management of sea country and the benefits and opportunities of engaging in higher learning in the rich cultural and island environment of North East Arnhem Land;
- Clearer pathways identifying on-country, in-university and other opportunities for Indigenous community leaders and members to learn about and engage in research and higher education, including but not limited to activities relevant to Indigenous land sea management;
- Developing communication tools (eg video, books) in partnership with the community and based on interviews with Indigenous land and salt water managers and relevant partners about their experiences in and around higher learning in Yolŋu wisdom, the arts and sciences;
- Growing the interest of young Indigenous people in career paths including; natural and cultural resource management, arts, dance and music; linking this to the requirements for individual success in mainstream primary, secondary and higher education.

### Galiwin’ku Project Delivery and Outcomes

Galiwin’ku commenced an inter-tidal monitoring project that involved Shepherdson and Gäwa school students, rangers, community members and scientists to help students identify and understand marine life associated within the tidal movements. The education pathways this project promotes required students to engage with the teaching and learning cycle Rich Focus Units from the esseNTial Learnings component of the NT Curriculum Framework (NTCF) and the Learning on Country (LOC) framework. A series of workshops were scheduled to survey the reef in Galiwin’ku on the low tide of the full moon. Teachers and scientists worked to together to develop a monitoring survey methodology that could be done by students to identify what marine life was found in different zones, such as intertidal muds, mangrove intertidal zone, shallow water intertidal and deep water to list a few. Once the ‘zone’ was determined, the students, teachers, community Elders and scientists would then determine what marine life was found in each zone. A number of surveys were conducted between April and June 2015 and again in 2016. A draft I-Tracker, digital data collection, application was developed for the students to use to record what they found. Trialling an I-Tracker...
application with the students at the same time as the students were intensely learning about the marine environment proved difficult and it was decided the I-Tracker application could be trialled at a later date.

Dr Bentley James was engaged to assist in the development of an education resource for the whole community to use about shellfish. Local knowledge about shellfish is incredibly diverse and is influenced by a large number of cultural factors that may not be recognised in non-Indigenous knowledge systems. Originally the shellfish resource would be focused around the Galiwin’ku school project to identify and learn about shell fish in their local area. From there an ever-growing body of knowledge began to promote wider and wider links stretching from the Crocodile Islands in the West to Blue Mud Bay in the east of Arnhem Land. This successful learning project evolved into a shellfish reference book project. The reference book Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place is to provide a broad volume of Yolŋu knowledge about shellfish in bilingual alphabetical order with Yolŋu names, English, Latin (Linnaean) and supplementary Yolŋu names in a number of Dhuwa and Yirritja languages. This beautifully illustrated colour book contextualises data about shellfish and environment that brings out the intimate linkages of Yolŋu local knowledge. Maps were also developed to identify shellfish locations and Yolŋu knowledge about shellfish. The book contains Yolŋu and western scientific knowledge on over 100 shellfish. All the content was reviewed and edited by community elders and Yolŋu Elders and community members who provided their knowledge to the development of this resource.

NAILSMA staff have also worked with Learning on Country Rangers to develop work plans and Dr Bentley James worked with teachers to talk about the importance of having bilingual text for learning in the classroom. The shellfish project work is diverse, inclusive and a useful framework for important discussion about similarly diverse employment, training and career pathways, bridging local cultural knowledge and confidence with scientific and technical knowledge and opportunities.

The Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place resource was finalised and sent to the printers in August 2016. Once we receive the book from the printers it will be distributed to all participants, contributors, schools and libraries in the Arnhem Land region. We are hoping to distribute the book wider to libraries and schools across Australia.

Below is an example of how shellfish information is displayed in the Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place

![Example shellfish information display](image)
Wider Community Support

A number of community organisations who contributed to the book made a financial donation to the development costs associated with the book. As the book project spread across Arnhem Land, so did the associated costs. NAILSMA would like to thank Shepherdson College, Gumurr Marthakal Rangers, Galiwin’ku Learning on Country program, Laynhapuy Homelands Association and the Yirralka Rangers, Milingimbi Outstation Progress and the Crocodile Island Rangers, Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation and the Djelk Rangers, Buku-Larrnggay Mulka Art, Yirrkala Homelands, Yirrkala school, Dhimurru Rangers and the Northern Land Council. Without the support of these organisations the development of this type of resource would not have been possible. Ranger groups also provided shellfish and knowledge from their local area.

Below is a photo of Traditional Owners, the Galiwin’ku Learning on Country Program (LoCP), Shepherdson College, Gäwa Homelands School, Yälu-marrgikunnhamirr, the Gumurr Marthakal, Crocodile Islands and Yirralka Rangers are all working together to pass on local knowledge about coastal life.

Challenges

The project had few challenges and was well supported throughout. One challenge in the development of the book was not only the various names for any one shellfish, but agreeing on the correct spelling for each shellfish. The book is written in Yolŋu-Matha; however, there are many different dialects. In some cases, the spelling of names of shellfish was changed up to six times, depending on who was reviewing the text and where they were from. Collection and cross referencing of spelling for the region as a whole, has been achieved through thorough process in the best way possible involving many senior and expert Yolŋu over approximately 12 months.

A decision was made based on professional knowledge and experience to use Zorc as the core reference for spelling, and where discovered, alternative names for the same maypal species have been written underneath. Yirrinba Dhurrkay, a senior Yolŋu linguist from Milingimbi reiterated that
there are sub regional variations in the spelling of Yolŋu-matha words that can create continuity issues in a regional publication such as this. The variations may have a number of sources but are primarily because that lingua franca is made up from the nine major East Arnhem languages. She agreed that David Zorc’s work was an acceptable and often used reference to get continuity of spelling in Yolŋu-matha across the Yolŋu language region.

**Future directions**
Once the *Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place* resource book is received from the printers it will be distributed to all participants, contributors, schools and libraries in the Arnhem Land region. Potential areas that NAILSMA can support in the future may include:

- NAILSMA’s continued support of the Learning on Country Program and development of further education resources, delivery of I-Tracker training on-country and in the classroom;

- the continuation of the school’s shellfish surveys involving community members and Elders and the use of the *Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place* as another reference; and

- the development of marine science bilingual lessons based on local shellfish and habitat.

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**Gunbalanya Project Management Plan**

1. **Background**
   Initial discussions were held with Adjumarllarl Rangers and Njanjma Rangers, the two local ranger groups based in Gunbalanya, as well as previous discussions with Aboriginal Researcher Practitioners Network (ARPNet), the Northern Land Council, Trainers and representatives from the Shire.

   Both ranger groups identified an interest in accessing training relevant to current work plans and funding commitments. There is a desire for rangers to be trained in digital data collection. *I-Tracker* was identified as delivering a critical skill set that both organisations and their staff wanted to receive formal training in.

   The Adjumarllarl Rangers have been operating for 30 years (started mid 80’s) and cover an area of approximately 10,000sqkm, but are currently struggling to find recurrent funding to sustain their ranger program post June 2015. They have a number of smaller fee for service contracts but have identified a need up-skill their rangers and position themselves as more capable of taking on future contracts.

   The Njanjma Ranger group started in 2015, working out of the DEMED yard & offices, and currently receive Working on Country (WOC) funding, are currently setting up their training program for the year.

   Although both ranger groups operate within the Gunbalanya township, they work at different capacities with Njanjma rangers currently developing their Healthy Country Plan and engaged in a number of on ground field activities, training and other projects.

   Adjumarllarl Rangers do preventative fire work; make safe around outstations; undertake AQIS work; work with Weeds Branch to do Mimosa, Mission, Gamba, Grader & other grass control; undertake fire work with WALFA & CALFA; harvest Crocodile eggs and deal with problem Crociles.

   Adjumarllarl Rangers also work with the school & other agencies around Gunbalanya. It is highly desirable for both ranger groups to have the opportunity to articulate what their training and further education interests are, on an individual ranger level as well as from the ranger organisation level.

   The Higher Education Program will focus on training development and pathway aspirations of the Adjumarllarl Rangers and other community members. This will enable a portfolio to be developed for each of the rangers and pathways to be identified with particular reference to the growth of the ranger programs and the individuals.

   Areas of interest include:
   - Local and Traditional knowledge
   - Horticulture training and development of small business enterprise
   - Digital data recording and monitoring of management efforts on country using *I-Tracker*
   - Desktop analysis of management efforts and reporting
   - Spatial data analysis, using various software, such as CyberTracker, Google Earth and other GIS software to create maps
   - Leadership, team management and supervisor skills
Gunbalanya

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- Local and Traditional knowledge
- Horticulture training and development of small business enterprise
- Digital data recording and monitoring of management efforts on country using I-Tracker
- Desktop analysis of management efforts and reporting
- Spatial data analysis, using various software, such as CyberTracker, Google Earth and other GIS software to create maps
- Leadership, team management and supervisor skills
The rangers are also interested in working with the school to identify and establish pathways for students wanting to transition into ranger work. There is an opportunity to look at other successful programs and frameworks such as the Learning on Country (LoC) program currently operating in the five communities in North West Arnhem Land. NAILSMA has been a partner of this program since its inception and has delivered I-Tracker training to students placed with LoC schools. I-Tracker training has been matched to accredited training courses to ensure people gain recognition and skills for unaccredited training workshops.

There are other training opportunities currently commencing that may be of interest to the Gunbalanya ranger groups and wider community, including a Cert II and III in Compliance. NAILSMA is currently working with the RTO delivering these courses to identify the development of and use of I-Tracker applications as part of this course.

2. I-Tracker
I-Tracker, short for 'Indigenous Tracker', is a NAILSMA program that supports Indigenous land and sea managers across north Australia to undertake natural and cultural resource monitoring, mapping, research and management activities using digital technology and equipment. I-Tracker provides on-site individual and group training for Indigenous rangers and on-going technical support via regular site visits, email and phone contact. Regular technical and computer skill workshops are delivered by a team of qualified staff with skills in land and resource management, geographical information systems (GIS), computer software and information management. The I-Tracker program is now a key support service for Indigenous land and sea managers, particularly for ranger programs and those developing or administering Indigenous Protected Areas. I-Tracker has significantly improved the capacity for consistent, professional data collection and management across the Indigenous estate in north Australia.

3. Project Objectives and Outputs
- Identify and map out individual pathway aspirations
- Develop a horticulture small business enterprise plan aimed at up-skilling rangers and local community members
- Identify pathways and education opportunities available to community members in the areas of data management, mapping and reporting, leadership and business management
- Develop an I-Tracker training schedule that can be incorporated into the rangers accredited training schedule and suited to ranger work schedules and individual training aspirations
- Identify and develop school based training opportunities for middle and secondary school students, including on-country camps
- Maximise the involvement, knowledge and skills of senior Aboriginal knowledge holders in the design and carriage of higher learning pathways

4. Community involvement
Engagement with relevant Indigenous community members is key to the success of this project. The details of local course content and delivery methods will be driven by locally identified community members. NAILSMA will work closely with community members to identify opportunities for people to participate in training, education and employment relevant to community aspirations. Community partners may include:
• Adjumarllarl Rangers
• DEMED
• Gunbalanya School
• West Arnhem Regional Council

5. External Partners
NAILSMA will work closely with HEPPP-WCE partners including, Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Institute (BI), Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledge’s and Education (ACIKE) and the Northern Territory Government (NTG) to identify synergies across other areas of the program and collaborate where appropriate.

NAILSMA will work with external partners to identify services for remote Indigenous students that support Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN), knowledge retention, job related skills and education and employment pathways.
Other external partners may include:
• Aboriginal Research Practitioners Network (ARPNet)
• Job Link Network

Gunbalanya Project Delivery and Outcomes
NAILSMA focused on working with the Adjumarllarl Rangers and Gunbalanya School during the project. Adjumarllarl Rangers have been operating for 30 years and cover an area of approximately 10,000sqkm, but are struggling to find recurrent funding to sustain their ranger program post June 2015. They have a number of smaller fee for service contracts but have identified a need up-skill their rangers and position themselves as more capable of taking on future contracts. Adjumarllarl Rangers do a range of on-ground work from fire management to exotic species management to biosecurity work.

It is highly desirable for the rangers to be supported and have the opportunity to articulate their training and further education interests, both as employed rangers as well as from a personal perspective. Planning meetings were held with the rangers to determine their work schedule for the year and therefore the training and skills they required to do their work. I-Tracker training was identified as important for developing the ranger’s skills in digital data management, monitoring and evaluation of their work activities and computer and mapping training.

I-Tracker
A number of workshops were held with the Adjumarllarl Rangers to set them up to use I-Tracker to record data about the work that they do. I-Tracker training was delivered in 3 steps:
1. I-Tracker Set up: this training included computer office setup, understanding what was in the application, how to use the hardware, and how to collect information and recording sightings
2. I-Tracker training in the field: using I-Tracker on the job to collection information on the work that they are doing. Modifications were made to the I-Tracker application to make it more suitable the rangers needs, including local weed species added to ‘quick list’ with ID photos
3. I-Tracker computer training: Computer based I-Tracker training was delivered to the rangers showing them how to transfer data from mobile devices onto the computer, analyse data on the computer and produce maps and field reports.

I-Tracker training with VETiS students
NAILSMA also delivered I-Tracker training to Gunbalanya VETiS students interested in a career as a rangers or as butchers at the local meatworks. Working closely with the VETiS trainer, a training plan was identified to suit students interested in both employment options. I-Tracker training was combined with a field exercise to set up a pig trap, record its location, bait, and the habitat where it was set up and why. This enables the students to digitally record their work activities in the same way that Rangers do. Once back in the classroom the students looked at the map of the field exercise, discussed the activities they had recorded and created a map. A photo story report detailing the training was produced and provided to students and the school as a record of the training delivered. Gunbalanya school are interested in receiving more I-Tracker training in the future and further discussions are hopeful for 2017.

Training Portfolios
Many of the rangers had completed a number of Conservation and Land Management training units but were unsure as to what they had done. It was decided that training portfolios be developed for rangers to determine where they were up to with their training. Academic assessment records were sought for each student from CDU and Batchelor to determine what training participants had been involved in to date. Conversations were held with individuals to identify what their education and career aspirations were and what training options were available to support these pathways. Training and development plans we given to each participant to equip them and provide a greater understanding about the level of training they are up to and assist them to be in control of their training.

NAILSMA submitted funding applications with the Adjumarllarl Rangers to support future opportunities to work together. Unfortunately, these submissions were not successful, however there is still potential to continue to work together into 2017 and beyond.
Traineeship

NAILSMA organised meetings with DEMED (Adjumarllarl Rangers host organisation), Group Training NT and Gunbalanya school to set up a traineeship pathway for students interested in working in the land management sector. Discussions were positive and all parties were interested in making this opportunity work. Unfortunately, there were a number of reasons that this did not go ahead during the project period. Timing for all organisations did not align, for example, when the rangers were ready to take on a trainee, the school was about to go on end of year holidays, so it was postponed to begin in the 2016 new year. Discussions continued in 2016 and GTNT were still able to support a traineeship, but changes in staffing at DEMED and change of students at the school, meant the traineeship was put on hold. This is something that could be followed up in the future if the right support is still possible.

Challenges
Challenges in delivery the project in Gunbalanya included:

- Arranging suitable times to hold HEPPP workshops and deliver training to rangers and the school. Managing project timeframes to fit in with numerous schedules proved difficult as well as the impact of wet season. Gunbalanya road access is cut off from approximately October to April each year depending on the amount of rain received in any given year. Accessing Gunbalanya at this time is via Charter travel which is expensive.

- A change in staffing at DEMED and a lack of funding meant that it was difficult for the organisation to commit to projects. A number of funding applications were written to try to relieve pressure of the organisation, but these were not successful.

Future directions
A number of future opportunities to continue to support rangers, school students and other community members interested in land and sea management include:

- I-Tracker training with Rangers, and school students has been flagged as potential training to continue into the future.

- Adjumarllarl Rangers have identified that a whole of country plan would be of interest to them. This would help to identify current and future work priorities, map out education and training for ranger work projects and review community land and sea management priorities.

- Originally NAILSMA hoped to commence training with the Adjumarllarl ranges in the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management in mid 2016, but due to other Ranger work commitments, such as fire management this training was postponed. There is a potential for this training to be delivered in 2017.

- A possible traineeship between Adjumarllarl Rangers, Group Training NT and Gunbalanya school could be set up for students interested in working in the land management sector.
Communications Outputs
Pathway Posters
Five pathway posters were developed to provide information on potential education and career pathways in education, business, horticulture, science and land and sea management. Copies of posters will be provided to project participants and schools and made available for download on the NAILSMA website. All the posters are based on potential career opportunities in land and sea management.

VET is an alternative training and education pathway for remote learners wanting to further their learning, and is increasingly offered in remote schools as an alternative to a standard ‘academic’ pathway; therefore, more work to support culturally appropriate VET certificates and delivery would be beneficial.

The posters were given to project participants to review and provide comment. Some community members wanted to see culturally important positions held by Elders and senior community members identified on the poster also with western recognised positions, such as CEO, to show the cultural importance of these positions. This was acknowledged as an important message to convey.
and acknowledge the importance and relevance of Indigenous Knowledge. This idea was explored with various community members from different communities, and there were many different ideas about how this information could be displayed and potentially compared to western jobs and qualifications. There was not enough time in this project to explore these ideas in depth and identify if there was a unified ideal of how this information could communicated or whether it is locally relevant and different for each community. Although this information was not included in these posters, it identified as an ideal project to pursue in the future.

NAILSMA would also like to see these posters translated into various communities preferred languages to enable the information to reach more people.

**NAILSMA ENews and photo books**

During the project, eight eNews articles were produced and circulated to NAILSMA partners and other interested parties during the project. The articles can be found on the NAILSMA website and include:

- Maningrida senior community members trial the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management (ILM).
- Maningrida Community Members trial the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management (ILM) – Workshop 2. Link: [http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=2893ca9639&e=Maningrida workshop 2](http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=2893ca9639&e=Maningrida workshop 2)
- Yirralka Rangers pilot the Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management, October 2015. Link: [http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=789b21e0b7&e=82ade98ea2](http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=789b21e0b7&e=82ade98ea2)
- Developing culturally appropriate qualifications for Indigenous land and sea managers. Link: [http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=d6f042b2b0&e=82ade98ea2](http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=d6f042b2b0&e=82ade98ea2)
- Coastal livelihoods, inter-tidal zones, shellfish and the future. Link: [http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=bf3c6a0808&e=82ade98ea2](http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=bf3c6a0808&e=82ade98ea2)
- NAILSMA delivers I-Tracker training with Adjumarllarl Ranger in Gunbalanya March 2016. Link: [http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=7fd99d1f56&e=82ade98ea2](http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=33d928b7aeb17804ab4e0cba0&id=7fd99d1f56&e=82ade98ea2)
- Gunbalanya
- Singing Songs of Country: practical pathways and confidence building for Higher Learning (Yuendumu)

A number of photo books were developed for community as a record of workshops held. Photo books were developed for the Indigenous Land Management Pilot Project workshops in Maningrida and Yirrkala, and I-Tracker training for VETiS students in Gunbalanya.
Education Resources

*Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place*

The reference book *Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place* was developed to provide a broad volume of Yolŋu knowledge about shellfish in bilingual alphabetical order with Yolŋu names, English, Latin (Linnaean) and supplementary Yolŋu names in a number of Dhuwa and Yirritja languages. This beautifully illustrated colour book contextualises data about shellfish and environment that brings out the intimate linkages of Yolŋu local knowledge. Maps were also developed to identify shellfish locations and Yolŋu knowledge about shellfish.

*Jurlpu Wardikinpirri-wana - Warlpiri Bird Dictionary and habitat posters*

A report and bird reference book was developed by the Yuendumu School Bilingual Resources Development Unit (BRDU) in collaboration with NAILSMA as a record of the Newhaven Sanctuary bush trip. During the trip 34 bird species that had not previously been identified in the existing dictionary, *Jurlpu kuja karlipa nyanyi Yurntumu-wana* (Warlpiri Bird Dictionary; Yuendumu BRDU and Central Land Council) were recorded, with information and stories in both Warlpiri and English. Bird habitat posters were also developed with this information, showing what birds can be found in different habitats.

*I-Tracker Warlpiri Bird Application*

The I-Tracker Warlpiri Bird Application will provide an interactive tool that supports literacy skill development and learning in both English and Warlpiri. Supporting learners to engage with knowledge about birds digitally, and also allows learners to record extra information or stories about the birds in their communities and homelands.
Overall Project Challenges

There are a number of underlying factors that have contributed to the time taken to get Project Management Plans developed and approved by communities. The Northern Territory Indigenous Education Review and the subsequent implementation of its recommendations have largely affected remote schools across the NT. This has meant that a number of schools have found it difficult to commit to new projects, i.e. HEPPP, as the future of some schools was and is still not certain. The commencement of the 2015 school year was problematic with some schools still confirming their level of funding, and retention of teachers and principals as a result.

To add to the complications, the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) adversely affected a number of Indigenous organisations. The IAS saw cuts to frontline services directly impacting Indigenous communities. This made discussions with some communities around the identification of pathways into higher education difficult and seen as a lesser priority in light of other pressing issues. This is not to say that communities did not engage in or want to discuss or be supported in their education aspirations, rather the impacts of funding changes through IAS and the broader state of Indigenous Affairs created urgent issues in communities.

Environmental factors impacting on projects, such as field trips, planned meetings or workshops, are not unusual in north Australia; however, it is important to note that two cyclones affected four of the HEPPP communities in Arnhem Land in early 2015. This resulted in planned trips being cancelled and postponed until communities were ready to continue external commitments and projects, which in some cases took months. Another HEPPP community site had a series of unfortunate events also occur earlier in the project, ultimately closing the community to outsiders until the community were happy to open and go back to ‘business’.

The impacts of the broader policy context and environmental factors could not have been foreseen, despite the knowledge of the Indigenous Education Review. The effects to some communities have been constant and continue to occur, with not only the threat of secondary school closures, but with limited details of which schools will be affected, where or when. This is reflected by some communities’ inability to commit to new projects that involve working with remote schools and taking a whole of community approach, like programs such as HEPPP.

VET training

It has been identified throughout the project that VET is a realistic pathway for remote Indigenous learners wanting to engage in further learning and job-based training from their communities. However, this is not always easily accessible and comes with its own challenges including:

- RTOs generally require 10 participants to be able to deliver training, which can sometimes be difficult to arrange;
- Introduction of fees for courses, has meant that professional development/training opportunities for people that are already working (such as rangers) could now be much harder to access;
- Some people are being trained in units or courses that are below their highest certificate level, therefore people have been trained in the same unit multiple times; and
• Although there is a long list of courses and units available at CDU and BI, they are not all on offer at once and it’s not always clear what units will actually run and when, meaning training is not necessarily readily available.

Overall Project Successes and Future Directions
Some of the overall successes of the project include resources developed that support bilingual education in land and sea management. The usefulness/impact of these resources will extend far beyond the end of NAILSMA’s HEPPP-WCE projects. By placing discussions about education in the context of land and sea management and caring for country, NAILSMA and community members were able to identify projects that were relevant to community concerns, goals and interests, and that foster an interest in education pathways that is purposeful.

Overall project successes include:
• Certificate III in Indigenous Land Management (ILM) put on scope with Batchelor Institute in June 2016 as a result of NAILSMA’s pilot project. A culturally appropriate context for delivering units that recognise Traditional Ecological Knowledge in a western framework has been developed as part of this pilot. There is a lot of interest from Indigenous organisations and ranger groups across the NT and the Kimberley who want to take part in this training. NAILSMA will continue to work with Batchelor Institute to deliver the ILM.
• A Whole of Country Planning framework was developed for Traditional Owners (TO’s) to articulate their aspirations for managing their country. The Ijibarda (Longreach Waterhole) Plan takes on a holistic approach to planning, and situates formal education and training as a part of, and as a strategy for achieving the broader goals of TOs to care for country and create positive changes in their communities. This plan provides a framework for developing other whole of country plans for Indigenous land and sea managers across the north.
• The reference book Maypal, Mayali Ga Wäŋa: Shellfish, Meaning & Place that provides a broad volume of Yolŋu knowledge about shellfish in bilingual alphabetical order with Yolŋu names in a number of Dhuwa and Yirritja languages, English, and Latin (Linnaean). This book will be use throughout Arnhem Land and is a good example of how multilingual education resources can be developed.
• The development of a multilingual education resources including the Warlpiri bird book, posters and Warlpiri I-Tracker bird application.
• I-Tracker digital data collection system set up for Adjumarllarl Rangers, and training delivered to rangers and school students in Gunbalanya.

Future directions
NAILSMA recognises that practical learning on country activities enhance local knowledge and support mainstream education outcomes. The significance of local and traditional knowledge to higher education lies in its capacity to engender confidence, enhance psychological resilience and promote positive personal identity in learners. This is particularly significant where mainstream language and culture are effectively foreign to the local learning environment. Confidence in local language and knowledge systems is both significant to learning in a mainstream context and is a critical foundation for active engagement in emerging land management economies, future livelihoods and employment outcomes.
As an Indigenous land and sea management organisation, NAILSMA works across a number of project areas to support Traditional Owners to care for country. NAILSMA will continue to work with and support communities involved in these projects where possible into the future. A number of these projects will continue after the completion of HEPPP. NAILSMA has also identified a number of potential partners or funding grants to support communities in their aspirations for learning, education and career development.

The Indigenous Land Management Certificate III is a course that will suit a number of Indigenous communities wanting access to culturally appropriate nationally recognised land and sea management training. NAILSMA will continue to develop this course to ensure that Traditional Owners remain in control of the content for the traditional knowledge units and are involved in the delivery and co-assessment of this training. We expect that this training will become standard for Indigenous Rangers across the NT and potentially across north Australia.

NAILSMA will continue to work with communities to support them in developing culturally appropriate projects in the areas of research, science and innovation, Indigenous youth and leadership and training, education and career pathways.

For further information about NAILSMA’s work please visit: [www.nailsma.org.au](http://www.nailsma.org.au) or contact [contact@nailsma.org.au](mailto:contact@nailsma.org.au).
Appendix 14 – Action Statement on Indigenous adult English Language, Literacy and Numeracy in the NT (March 2017)
Action Statement on Indigenous Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy in the Northern Territory

March 2017

Literacy is a fundamental human right and essential to peoples’ ability to fully develop their knowledge and potential. English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN 1) capability enables progression along educational and career pathways and is essential for full participation in community, business, the economy and broader society. Current Indigenous adult LLN policy focuses on employment however, improved adult LLN has proven flow on effects for children, parents, families, and society as a whole. Everyone - including government, non-government, business and the community, have a responsibility to work together, ensuring design and delivery of literacy capacity building models where Indigenous people actively ‘own’ the process. A long-term, Territory-wide, multi-partisan policy commitment is essential to sustained LLN outcomes in urban, regional and remote areas of the NT.

In November 2016 eighty one individuals (36% were Indigenous) from twenty-eight organisations and agencies attended a LLN workshop at Charles Darwin University (CDU), participants identified significant need and support for positive change, formed an LLN Network, agreed on the core elements of a joint statement and committed to action.

The LLN Network 2 hopes that the following Statement will make a positive contribution to the essential foundational work required for improved Indigenous adult LLN in the NT. The Statement calls for the development of a targeted policy framework, clarification of responsibility, and coordinated action.

The LLN Network welcomes the opportunity to continue to work closely with all tiers of Government and other stakeholders on this critical issue.

Although we use the term ‘LLN’ throughout this document we are also referring to the range of foundation skills required in order to establish, apply and maintain LLN in life, on-line, and in the workplace. Refer to the definitions in Appendix 1, Part II.

2 Refer to Appendix 3 for list of organisations and numbers attending the November workshop.
Action Statement on Indigenous Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy in the Northern Territory

March 2017

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2 Refer to Appendix 3 for list of organisations and numbers attending the November workshop
What is required?

1. An Indigenous adult LLN policy framework
   1.1 Consult on, and identify, where overall responsibility for Indigenous adult LLN sits within the Northern Territory Government and which department may be responsible for development and implementation of an Indigenous adult LLN policy framework for the NT.
   1.2 Institute a broad and inclusive multi-partisan, inter-sectoral consultation process to raise awareness and develop the policy framework and implementation plan.

2. Long term investment to build capacity
   2.1 Identify commitment and options for long-term, secure and flexible funding for implementation of the adult LLN framework.
   2.2 Identify commitment to, and options for, funding for accredited as well as non-accredited training to meet the vocational education, academic, and real-time learning needs of Indigenous adults at all levels of the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)3.
   2.3 Commit to resourcing and maintaining a qualified, well-resourced adult literacy workforce in the Territory who have job-security. This workforce should include a high proportion of Indigenous people and local language speakers.
   2.4 Reflect requirements of the Foundation Skills Professional Standards Framework (Foundation Skills Strategy 2012) in the training and development of LLN practitioners.
   2.5 Commitment to building and maintaining local level, non-formal LLN delivery capacity within urban, regional and remote settings through provision of education, training, resourcing and mentoring of local level workers/volunteers/champions.

3. Innovative and culturally appropriate delivery responses
   3.1 Expand the evidence-base of proven LLN service design and delivery models which may meet the needs of Indigenous adults, organisations and communities in the NT. This includes, but is not limited to:
      a) Community-wide and community-campaign models
      b) Workplace capacity building models
      c) Organisational workforce development models
      d) State-wide delivery models
   3.2 Clarify responsibility for convening and maintaining the NT-wide LLN stakeholder network to inform government policy-making, standards of delivery, and amplify the Indigenous voice.

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3 Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) – the Australian Government’s tool for measuring competency in reading, writing, numeracy, oral communication and learning skills.
3.3 Provide support for maximum Indigenous input at all consultation stages to ensure that LLN program models and education and training resources include Indigenous pedagogies and content.

3.4 Apply best practice approaches when employing, training and retaining Indigenous employees, and in joint venture initiatives, through assessment of ACSF levels and subsequent provision of appropriate developmental support.

3.5 Assess and build the capacity of community-based LLN “champions” through targeted training and support.

### 4. Building a stronger evidence base

| 4.1 | Consolidate and generate statistics or conduct a survey on ACSF levels of Indigenous adults in the NT, including those from urban, regional and remote settings. |
| 4.2 | Undertake a study of the economic impact/cost of low levels of LLN in the Indigenous population in the NT. |
| 4.3 | Establish an LLN clearinghouse function for the NT which includes a comprehensive database of research evidence to raise awareness, increase understanding, and support consultation and policy-making processes. |
| 4.4 | Establish a clearinghouse for collection and distribution of appropriate LLN teaching and learning resources (past and present). |
| 4.5 | Resource and embed developmental evaluation into programs and projects to enable:  
  a) Ongoing policy and service refinement  
  b) Comparison of different implementation models, tools and methods  
  c) Sharing of findings across an LLN focused network  
  d) Identification of factors contributing to success; and  
  e) Ongoing analysis of impact and outcomes (individual, family, social, economic etc.) |

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4. Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) – the Australian Government’s tool for measuring competency in reading, writing, numeracy, oral communication and learning skills.

Action Statement on Indigenous adult LLN in the NT: V1.0
Principles to guide policy and action

- The need for early establishment of first language is seen as essential to the continuing vitality of culture and heritage and to the development of LLN competency. Cultural heritage and English language are viewed as equally critical and mutually supportive.

- LLN policy and service delivery models should include genuine collaboration, the valuing of Indigenous knowledge and culture, and acknowledgement of Indigenous educational and career aspirations.

- It is essential that philanthropic, volunteer, business and industry sectors work in tandem with all tiers of government to increase sustainable Indigenous workforce participation in urban, regional and remote locations.

- Success will be enhanced by community-led and community-informed solutions, two-way collaboration, and a shared purpose based on mutual respect, trust and cooperation.

- Indigenous adults have the right to contribute to their own learning process where learners become teachers and teachers become learners. Therefore, communities should be able to tailor and inform LLN programs to best suit their own location and context, needs, purposes, goals and aspirations.

- Adequate time, resources and expertise are required prior to commencement of community literacy campaigns, to stimulate conversations and information-sharing within communities. These activities enable assessment of project feasibility based on levels of individual and community interest.

The Action Statement working group
For the LLN Network
March 2017

The Strategic Priority Project on Indigenous adult language, literacy and numeracy is part of the Whole of Community Engagement Initiative which is funded through the Australian Governments’ Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) being implemented through the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University.

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Part two
Background information for the Action Statement on Indigenous adult LLN

Prepared by the working group of the
NT Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) Network
March 2017

This document provides some essential background information on Indigenous adult literacy in the NT to support the Action Statement on Indigenous adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN).

The Northern Territory Government’s ‘Framing the Future Strategic Plan’ lays the foundation for a “prosperous economy and sets the guidelines for a strong society that ensures everyone has the same access to opportunities and resources and lays out a policy to encourage everyone to participate”. Currently the NT government is developing an economic framework that will form the basis for long-term economic decision making in the Territory. The Australian Governments’ ‘Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing the North’ states that “The north will only truly achieve its potential with the participation of all the people who live there, including Indigenous Australians.” There is widespread recognition of the importance of Indigenous economic engagement, maximised employment, and participation in business development.

Many Indigenous adults cannot reach their potential or participate fully in the economy or in society due to low levels of English language literacy and numeracy (LLN). The economic cost of low levels of Indigenous adult LLN in the NT has never been calculated. Also, there are no consolidated statistics available for Indigenous adult LLN levels (as there are for other States and Territories).

The Northern Territory (NT) is the only Australian state or territory to have no statement, policy or strategy for Adult Community Education (ACE) or any direct application of government funding to the sector. Most state and territory ACE strategies or policy statements recognise the importance of ACE in delivering language, literacy and numeracy. (ALA, 2013)

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5 Adam Giles, Framing the Future (2015)
6 Although we use the term ‘LLN’ throughout this document we are also referring to the range of Foundation skills required in order to establish, apply and maintain LLN in life, on-line and in the workplace. Refer to Appendix 1.
7 The Role of Adult and Community Education in Regional & Rural Australia. Melbourne: Adult Learning Australia (2013).
The national Adult Literacy and Life Skills survey (ALLS) in 2006 did not include data from remote community settings. As an indicator of NT ACSF³ levels, between 2010 and 2012 the Charles Darwin University (CDU) Adult Literacy and Numeracy (ALN) team conducted 266 Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) assessments⁹ of work-ready people in a number of remote Indigenous NT communities. The outcome was that 86% of those assessed were at ACSF 1 or below (the lowest level on the 5 point ACSF scale). Level 3 is the level required to engage productively in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and to function well within any workplace.

The resident population of the NT in 2015 was 244,307 and approximately thirty percent of this population are Indigenous. The NT Government acknowledges that a critical issue for long term growth prospects of the Territory is the degree to which the Indigenous population is engaged and participates in the economy and the workforce¹¹. Indigenous people, however, remain proportionally under-represented in the NT workforce. Many Indigenous adults cannot advance along educational pathways beyond Certificate II level in VET because their skills in reading and writing, numeracy and oral English communication are not at a level that allows progression along the learning pathway¹¹. Also, enrolment numbers, retention rates and educational outcomes for Indigenous people in higher education continue to remain low in the Territory.¹² A significant contributing factor is that appropriate, long-term and customised adult language, literacy and numeracy assistance is generally hard to find and secure.

English language, literacy and numeracy proficiency is critical to a person’s ability to engage with mainstream society and systems, and central to having an informed voice in all aspects of daily life; from parenting and interacting with health-care and legal systems, applying for jobs, accessing a bank account or obtaining a drivers’ licence, to financial and business management and tendering for business contracts. LLN ability is critical to an empowered Indigenous contribution to social action, policy making and decisions about how best to frame the Indigenous future. The Industry Skills Advisory Council (ISAC) of the NT noted that “At the recent Nhulunbuy forum a Yolngu participant asked ‘How many Yolngu people know about these economic summits to develop the North?’ He said, ‘Yolngu people do not understand these words, they know shop language but do not know this language for business and economic development.’ ISAC commented that “unless we have in place a plan for developing foundational skills, Aboriginal people will continue to be unfairly excluded from economic development across Northern Territory”³³.

The above statement is an indication of the significant policy and services gaps which exist for Indigenous adults who live in the NT, where remoteness is a significant issue and English is often spoken as a second or third language and not often used at home. No government policy comprehensively addresses the LLN needs of the majority of Indigenous adults in the NT, that is, all people who are no longer attending school. Also, a primary policy focus is on early childhood and school-aged LLN yet the 2017 Closing the Gap Prime Ministers’ Report states that “across the eight areas (reading and numeracy for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9), the proportion of Indigenous students achieving national minimum standards in NAPLAN is on track in only one area (Year 9 numeracy) and that “NAPLAN results for Indigenous students are worse in more remote areas.” It is to be noted that the NAPLAN measurement system does not acknowledge the fact

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8 The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF). That is, the Australian governments’ standard for comprehensively assessing: reading, writing, numeracy, oral communication and learning skills.
9 The Australian governments’ standard for comprehensively assessing: reading, writing, numeracy, oral communication and learning skills.
10 Building Northern Territory Industry Participation (BNTIP) Policy: Department of Trades, Business and Innovation, 2016
11 Retention rates in very remote Australia are estimated at 16.6%, and it is likely that the rates are lower in the NT (BIITE, publication pending, 2017).
13 Email comment to the SPP source: Industry Skills Council of the NT, March 2017
that for many Indigenous children in the NT English is a second language and that teachers are not ESL\(^4\) trained.

A panel discussion at the national Indigenous Leaders’ Conference at Charles Darwin University in November 2016 highlighted that, although adult LLN continues to be treated as a peripheral issue it is actually at the core of this economic dilemma as well as central to social capacity building and community development. A comprehensive, committed Territory-wide, approach to low levels of LLN is required in the NT\(^5\).

Evidence gathered by Whole of Community Engagement (WCE)\(^6\) initiative at CDU during the past two and a half years indicates high levels of educational aspiration within the six remote NT communities where it has operated. Indigenous leaders and other stakeholders have spoken out strongly about the need for improved English LLN and said that they continue to feel “locked out” or “left behind” in education. The WCE initiative found that if a person has low levels of LLN and they are not within the school system, then accessing resources and assistance is most often extraordinarily difficult. Many people also spoke about the general need for Indigenous-led and Indigenous-informed approaches and the need for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to work together respectfully, sharing knowledge and expertise to find solutions to this complex issue.

Through interviews, focus groups and workshops the WCE Strategic Priority Project (SPP) on LLN has identified high levels of organisational and inter-sectoral commitment to support positive change and improved Indigenous adult LLN in the NT. A pre-conference workshop Indigenous adult English LLN was organised at CDU on the 9th November, 2016. The one-day workshop was attended by eighty people from twenty-eight organisations and government agencies (Appendix 3).\(^7\) Thirty-five percent of participants were Indigenous, including a number of senior leaders. A network of interested individuals and organisations was consolidated at that event and the membership continues to expand.

The elements of an Action Statement on Indigenous Adult LLN were agreed at the workshop. The Action Statement has been edited by a group of sectoral specialists, including Indigenous educators, National Training Award recipients, and a range of others in business, government and non-government agencies and academia who were present on the day (Appendix 3). The Action Statement fully supports the spirit and intent of associated Northern Territory and Commonwealth Government policy initiatives (Appendix 2).

Those present at the LLN workshop hope that this Statement will contribute to positive change and coordinated inter-sectoral and multi-partisan responses to low levels of Indigenous adult literacy in the NT. We welcome the opportunity to continue to work closely with all tiers of government and stakeholders on this critical issue.

The Action Statement working group, for the LLN Network

March 2017

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14 English as a Second Language (ESL)
15 It is to be noted that the Tasmanian Government is currently implementing a successful ten year, annually funded policy framework and action plan through delivery of the 26TEN adult LLN program.
16 Funded through the Australian Governments' Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) at CDU
17 Refer to attendance list in the Workshop Report
Appendix one: LLN Definitions

The following definitions support the will and intent of the Action Statement:

1. **The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Developments’ (OECD) definition of literacy for the Programme of International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC):**
   “Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.”

2. **OECD definitions of literacy and mathematical literacy for the Programme of International Student Assessment:**
   “Reading literacy is defined in PISA as the ability to understand, use and reflect on written texts in order to achieve one’s goals, to develop one’s knowledge and potential, and to participate effectively in society.”
   **Source Publication:** Education at a Glance, OECD, Paris, 2002, Glossary
   “Mathematical literacy is defined in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) as the capacity to identify, understand and engage in mathematics, and to make well-founded judgements about the role that mathematics plays in an individual’s current and future private life, occupational life, social life with peers and relatives, and life as a constructive, concerned and reflective citizen.”
   **Source Publication:** Education at a Glance, OECD, Paris, 2002, Glossary

3. **United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation extract from the Belem Framework:**
   “Literacy is an essential basic skill and a key competency for active citizenship in all parts of the world. It evolves and is embedded in everyday life, working life and civic life. Literacy is continuously shaped and reshaped by the evolving complexities of culture, economy and society. Adult education definitively extends beyond adult literacy, but adult literacy is imperative for people to engage in meaningful learning. It is a prerequisite for personal, social and political emancipation.”
   *(Harnessing the power and potential of adult learning and education for a viable future Belém Framework for Action 2013, pg 3)*

   “For the purpose of this Strategy, foundation skills are defined as the combination of: English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) – listening, speaking, reading, writing, digital literacy and use of mathematical ideas; and employability skills, such as collaboration, problem solving, self-management, learning and information and communication technology (ICT) skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life. Foundation skills development includes both skills acquisition and the critical application of these skills in multiple environments for multiple purposes.”
Appendix two: Related Government policies

Following are a number of the policy documents which support Indigenous adult literacy. The list is not comprehensive. There is a policy gap for Indigenous adults at a national and Territory level. It is to be noted that none of the following policies comprehensively address the needs of the majority of Indigenous adults in the NT.

   A ten-year framework which brings a national focus to improving education and employment outcomes for working age Australians with low levels of foundation skills (language, literacy, numeracy and employability skills).
   

2. The Australian Core Skills Framework
   The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) is a tool which assists both specialist and non-specialist English language, literacy and numeracy practitioners to describe an individual’s performance in the five core skills of learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy. It provides a consistent national approach to identifying and developing the core skills in three diverse contexts; personal and community; workplace and employment; and education and training. In particular, it offers: a) shared concepts and language for identifying, describing and discussing the core skills, and b) a systematic approach to benchmarking, monitoring and reporting on core skills performance.
   

   

   Building Northern Territory Industry Participation has been developed as a direct response to business and industry development needs. It aims to increase local industry participation in projects through giving competitive Territory businesses the opportunity to contribute to the future growth of the Territory and enhancing Territory business and industry capability.
   

   “The White Paper includes measures to unlock the north’s potential across six key areas: simpler land arrangements to support investment; developing the north’s water resources; growing the north as a business, trade and investment gateway; investing in infrastructure to lower business and household costs; reducing barriers to employing people; and improving governance.”
   
6. **Remote Engagement and Coordination Strategy, Northern Territory Department of Local Government and Community Services, 2015**

The Strategy “responds to the identified need for the Northern Territory Government to work more effectively to achieve better outcomes for community members, including for example, consistent and accountable remote engagement and coordination practice across the NT and improved coordination and collaboration within and between NTG agencies, communities, regions and head office in recording, tracking and responding to ideas and issues raised…”


A Share in the Future strategy is a 10-year reform committed to ensuring Indigenous students in the NT are successful and confident in their education journey. Implementing the strategy “will provide Indigenous students with real career choices and opportunities both within and beyond their communities.”


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**Appendix three: The LLN Network**

**Table one: Composition of the LLN Network (at the time of the Nov. LLN Workshop)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation / People</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>6. Australian Government: Department of Employment (NT) 1</td>
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<td>7. Australian Government: Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (Top End and Central Australia) 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. NT Dept. of Tourism and Culture: Northern Territory Library service 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. NT Department of Trade, Business and Innovation: Strategic Policy - Training 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) 10</td>
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<td>12. CDU - Adult Literacy and Numeracy team – Top End and Central Australia and learner support (1) 7</td>
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<td>23. University of New England 1</td>
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<td>24. Central Land Council - Walpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) 2</td>
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<td>Walpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willowra Learning Centre 1</td>
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<td>Yalu Margithinyaraw Centre, Galiwinku 4</td>
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Total number of people 81
## Appendix three: The LLN Network

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<tr>
<td>24. Central Land Council - Walpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Walpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Willowra Learning Centre</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Yalu Margithinyaraw Centre, Galiwinku</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of people</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**LLN Workshop attendance analysis**

The LLN workshop held in November 2016 was attended by 81 people from 28 organisations and Government Departments (NT and Commonwealth). There were 21 speakers. Of the 81 people who attended the conference about 36% were Indigenous. People from 7 other organisations sent apologies and expressions of interest in participating in the network. At the end of the day everyone in the room voted to form the initial membership of an NT-Network for Language Literacy and Numeracy. A group of people also volunteered to consider the individual group consensus statements to make one statement.

**Table 2: The Action Statement Working Group**

*The following organisations / positions have commented on and shaped this document:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation / Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industry Skills Advisory Council NT: Industry Skills Advisory Officers X 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education: 1X Senior Advisor, 1X Senior researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Indigenous leaders and educationalists: X 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Pro-vice chancellor of Indigenous Leadership: (Senior Staff) X 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole of Community Engagement initiative –3 Senior academics, one evaluation coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmanian Government LINC program: Manager X 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research - CAEPR – ANU: Senior researcher X 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Centre for Educational Research – CDU: Senior academic X1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Learning and Teaching –CDU – Senior academic X1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent LLN consultant, Community Learning Centre Coordinator,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Training award winner X1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Securities Investment Commission (ASIC) X 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of New England X 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Strategic Priority Project on Indigenous adult language, literacy and numeracy is part of the Whole of Community Engagement Initiative which is funded through the Australian Governments’ Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) being implemented through the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University.

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