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Transcript of conversation with Miriam Yirriṅṅba:

What is your experience/s working with the Northern Institute?

I have had lots of experience working with the Northern Institute. I have worked as a researcher on a project about managing disasters in Town Communities and the Long Grass, and as a consultant for the Indigenous Researchers Initiative (IRI). I have also been employed as a language worker, translator and cultural advisor working with Michael Christie, and attended Steven Bird's app workshops. I'm also working with both NI and Yolŋu Studies, producing Livestream videos to teach Yolŋu Studies students.

This experience has been *manymak* (good) because Yolŋu are leading the way. Young Yolŋu people can see that this Yolŋu woman is leading the way and working with balanda.

To me this experience has been about finding leadership as a strong women working for my people. Now, when I want to teach balanda researchers about Yolŋu I have this experience and can stand there and talk to balanda to show them that they are journeying on the same pathway as us; *yaka* (no way) we are at a crossroads, we are following *wangany dhukarr* (one road).

What has been the result?

The Northern Institute now calls us up Raki Mala, an Indigenous corporation, to work with them to do *djäma* (work) with service providers and government. This is whenever they are involved in Indigenous initiatives *mala* (plural).

What do you see as the particular strengths of the NI researchers you work with?

They are *manymak* (good). Whenever there is *djäma* (work), they *riṅimap* (call) Yolŋu to work with them. They have the strength for collaboration, for *djäma rrambanji* (working together) with Yolŋu researchers and consultants.

Before we do the *djäma* (work) we sit and talk about the research together. We talk about how it is to be done, and what is the right way to go. They have the strength to follow a strategic road, making a strategy together, they have the strength for that *djäma* (work), to go through the path of working with *Yolŋu mala* (many Yolŋu) to do research *rrambanji* (altogether).

What would you like to achieve in the future with NI?

I would like to see *yothu* (young) Yolŋu working with the Northern Institute. To be doing research *djäma* (work) teaching *balanda mala* (many balanda) researchers together with other Yolŋu researchers and consultants so there will not be language gaps and barriers. In the future the Northern Institute will achieve *djäma dhukarr* (a path for our work) so together we can follow Yolŋu and balanda dreams and visions, and achieve this goal for everyone.

There is only one target for all of the research. Just one target, not one for Yolŋu and one for balanda. It is like targeting a kangaroo in the bush. There is only one kangaroo so all four people who are hunting have to run with the spear to target that one kangaroo for dinner. There is only one target for everyone.

Is there anything NI could do better with appropriate support?

Growing the research. There are so many communities in the NT to reach out to. There can be outreach from Yolŋu to Arrernte and Warlpiri; we can get involved with Central Australia, Tiwi, West Arnhem, Barkly to work together. Then we can learn.

Yolŋu can learn from these other people, and they can learn from us.

Then balanda can learn from all of us.

Bijin' (the end)

Miriam Yirrininba

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