



# Review, Assessment and Development of Future Options for the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) and its Programs

Final report, May 2017

Report prepared by  
Ninti One Limited for WETT





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The WETT painting was created by WETT Advisory Committee members Barbara Napanangka Martin, Yamurna Napurrurla Oldfield and Maisie Napaljarri Kitson in 2013 to tell the story of how WETT started and how it grew over the years

Other photos: acknowledged throughout

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## Shortened forms

<b>ALPA</b>	Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation
<b>Batchelor Institute</b>	Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
<b>BRDU</b>	Bilingual Resource Development Unit
<b>CDP</b>	Community Development Program
<b>CLC CDU</b>	Central Land Council Community Development Unit
<b>DoE</b>	Department of Education
<b>FaFT</b>	Families as First Teachers
<b>FaHCSIA</b>	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
<b>FATSL AC</b>	Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, Australian Curriculum
<b>IYLP</b>	Indigenous Youth Leadership Program
<b>NASCA</b>	National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy
<b>Newmont</b>	Newmont Mining Corporation/Newmont Asia Pacific
<b>NT</b>	Northern Territory
<b>PACE</b>	Parent and Community Engagement
<b>PAW Media</b>	Pintubi Anmatjere Warlpiri Media
<b>VET</b>	vocational education and training
<b>WETT</b>	Warlpiri Education and Training Trust
<b>WpkJ</b>	Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru
<b>WVA</b>	World Vision Australia
<b>WYDAC</b>	Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation

# Executive summary

In 2005, the CLC Community Development Unit was set up to work in partnership with Aboriginal people to direct their own resources to initiatives that both maintain their Aboriginal identity, language, culture and connection to country and strengthen their capacity to participate in mainstream Australia through improving health, education and employment outcomes. One of the longest standing projects supported by the Unit is the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT), which the CLC administers on behalf of the WETT Trustee, the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation. In 2016, the WETT commissioned a Review, looking back over 10 years of achievement and looking forward to the next 10 years. The purpose of the Review was to assess effectiveness of the programs and partnerships funded by WETT, to consider new program areas and to ensure that the directions of the Trust reflect and meet the aspirations of Warlpiri community members for learning, education and training in the next decade. The Review was carried out by a team lead by Samantha Disbray (from Charles Darwin University) and John Guenther (from Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education [Batchelor Institute]), contracted through Ninti One.

## Methods

The Review team used a ‘mixed methods’ approach that had a strong emphasis on close collaboration with the WETT Advisory Committee and on consultations with Warlpiri people who work in or use the programs, with interested community members and with non-Warlpiri service providers and stakeholders. This involved collaborative research planning and review with the WETT Advisory Committee at four points throughout the Review. The team spent 38 days in community visits, with at least seven days in each of the four Warlpiri communities: Willowra, Nyirripi, Yuendumu and Lajamanu. The Review team used surveys, interviews and meetings to consult with 130 Warlpiri people and 42 non-Warlpiri staff involved directly with WETT-funded programs.

## Findings on the WETT model

The following sets out, in brief, a response to each of the Review Questions.

### What did WETT set out to do, and to what extent has this been achieved?

The overarching intent of WETT has been to promote Warlpiri aspirations for learning, education and training. In summary, the Review found several high-level outcomes achieved by WETT to date. WETT has built **power through self-determination**, in partnerships, contractual accountability and participatory decision-making. It has **expanded networks of education professionals**, through WETT governance, reference groups and CLC administration support. The Committee has built **social capital**, through professional learning and sharing and linkages to external resources and networks. Programs have **increased economic capacity** through community infrastructure and activities.

Because of WETT, **local employment and employability have increased**. Programs have **increased skills and knowledge for individuals, families and communities**, as learning is at the core of program design. **Greater parental efficacy** has been achieved through early childhood infrastructure and staff. **Increased youth leadership and wellbeing** have been achieved through participation in youth activities and through the Jaru leadership development program. **Broader youth aspirations** have grown, with additional opportunities created by support for boarding students.

**Increased participation in school learning** has been achieved through access to vehicles and resources, learning experiences gained through excursions, and country visits. **Maintenance of Warlpiri language and culture** has been achieved through cultural learning in bush trips and through production of Warlpiri language learning resources. **Strengthened Warlpiri identities** have been achieved through elder involvement in programs and through creation of a range of media products. These outcomes are underpinned by the **work of partners who deliver programs**. Partnerships are crucial to the success of WETT's endeavours. The Review can point to the following measurable results:

- More than \$22,000,000 invested in programs since 2005
- About 40 people each year employed in various WETT-funded programs
- Up to 23 children and seven parents participating at Willowra early childhood activities
- Up to 37 individuals involved in local reference group meetings since 2013
- More than 200 individuals accessing certificate courses
- Learning Centres accessed more than 3,500 times in 12 months to June 2016
- Nearly 60 students involved in interstate secondary excursions in 12 months to June 2016
- Access to additional boarding support: 55 students benefited in the three years to 2015.

## What are the strengths and limitations of the current WETT model?

The current WETT model has had consistent support from WETT Advisory Committee members, Kurra WETT Directors and CLC staff over 10 years. Central to WETT's foundation are Warlpiri language, land and culture; and self-determination over education and training for Warlpiri children, youth and adults. Strong partnerships form the basis of program delivery; WETT has leveraged additional resources from some partners and has community support for all the programs it funds.

WETT has had a limited advocacy role which has resulted in minimal influence with the Northern Territory Government Department of Education (NT DoE). It has focused on monitoring, but not evaluation. The extent of outcomes in programs is not fully considered. The Learning Centre model has relied on formal training as a means for co-investment from Batchelor Institute, which has reduced non-formal learning opportunities. Learning Centres have relied on Kardiya coordinators, with limited scope for Yapa to take coordination roles. There have been difficulties achieving equitable distribution of resources across all communities. Finally, there have been constraints on sustainability of program delivery due to a limited number of providers.

## How can existing WETT programs and partnerships be strengthened?

The Review has identified several opportunities for strengthening partnerships and programs. They include improving pathways to employment for Yapa; improving accountability, performance and advocacy capacity through evaluation; and improving WETT Advisory Committee renewal by adapting governance structures and processes. The Review found a need for increased awareness of WETT in communities and a need for more adult learning opportunities. Many community members wanted programs to strengthen parenting skills. Others wanted to strengthen Warlpiri culture among youth. Retention of students in boarding school was also a concern.

## How can WETT programs be better linked to generate stronger education and learning outcomes?

Partnerships have been and will continue to be the basis of delivering successful education and learning programs for Warlpiri children, youth and adults. The Review team recognises the strong co-contribution partners have made to support Warlpiri aspirations. Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) is a standout example. In all programs and with all partners, WETT can build on the existing strengths which each brings.

## What are the key elements of government policies that might influence WETT's future direction?

The NT DoE is arguably the most important partner delivering education services across the region. It has affirmed the directions the NT Government took to the 2016 election, including a commitment to attendance strategies, restoring teacher numbers and supporting the early years. The DoE continues to roll out its Indigenous Education Strategy. A policy area that is likely to change soon is the Community Development Program, which is reportedly having negative effects on participants. Opportunities may arise from changes that will come. One area where a policy gap exists is in non-formal adult learning. While governments focus on vocational education and training (VET) foundation skills for employment, opportunities for those not looking for work to engage in adult learning are quite limited. The NT Government has no adult learning policy.

## What education and learning gaps and opportunities might lead to options for new WETT programs?

The Review points to several opportunities that address educational gaps for Warlpiri children, youth and adults. These include pursuing additional apprenticeship and training opportunities, particularly for young people. There are opportunities to encourage university transition. Retention at boarding schools needs to be improved, as many students return early from schools only to disengage from education altogether. Using technology as a vehicle for learning can also be considered. Technologies could enhance existing Warlpiri learning resources (e.g. making them mobile device-friendly) and support new content and platforms. Improving family support through family strengthening programs is another recommendation of the Review.

## To what extent do these align with Warlpiri aspirations?

All the above align with Warlpiri expectations and aspirations. The data we received from 89 community surveys and more than 41 community interviews and focus groups showed what the priorities are. They include maintaining culture and supporting learning through country, increasing adult learning opportunities, strengthening families, building youth leadership and development, creating employment pathways for Yapa and supporting intergenerational learning and involvement.

## How well does the current WETT Advisory Committee represent the four communities?

The Review team participated in four WETT Advisory Committee meetings during the Review. At each meeting, all communities were well represented. Where members were not available, proxies attended. The Committee has its foundations built on school and early childhood educators. This means that the priorities of youth and adults are not as well represented by members as they could be, but the interests of each program area are always considered. Men are under-represented on the Committee, reflecting a mostly female education and adult learning workforce.

## How well will the current WETT Advisory Committee structure, processes and composition meet the strengths and needs for future WETT projects identified in the 2016–17 Review?

The Review team expects that its recommendations will take time to consider, and implementing them will take longer. Renewal and representation are concerns for the Committee. Members are getting older and may not have the energy to enact a plan for the next 10 years. Therefore, the Review team has recommended an expansion of the Committee to 16 members. The Committee has struggled to decide on a path for conducting elections. The Review team also recommends formal registration and recognition of proxies so that roles and responsibilities are clearer. The risks of not renewing and building the Committee will become evident as the long-term members retire, leaving less capacity to ensure that work required is carried out.

## Recommendations

The Review team made 32 recommendations, which are presented in abridged form below.

### Strategic directions

1. That the WETT Advisory Committee formulates the vision, mission and strategic principles by which WETT operates.
2. That WETT commissions an implementation plan to facilitate action steps approved following this Review.
3. That WETT communicates its long-term vision to, and engages with, its partners strategically to meet its long-term goals.

4. That WETT sets as a strategic goal the increase of Warlpiri employment pathways and options in the WETT-funded programs.
5. That all new contracts for WETT-funded activities include a requirement for monitoring and evaluation, based on an overarching monitoring and evaluation framework.

## Existing programs

6. That the current Early Childhood program be renamed 'Families and Children'.
7. That WETT continues to support the Willowra Playgroup and seeks funding to continue to employ Yapa staff.
8. That part of the Willowra Playgroup coordinator's role includes promoting and supporting the coordination of the Early Childhood reference group in Willowra and assisting Yapa staff to complete qualifications.
9. That WETT provides a flexible fund for Early Childhood activities in the four communities, to allow additional training, mentoring and professional learning.
10. That WETT a) funds a project to find a suitable partner to establish regular family strengthening programs in the four communities, and b) funds the programs (including evaluation) annually.
11. That the cluster of programs currently described as the Bilingual Resource Development project, Country Visits and Elder Payments, and support for Warlpiri Triangle and Jinta Jarrimi workshops through the Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru capacity-building support program be grouped under a heading of Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools.
12. That WETT continues to support all existing programs and activities listed in Recommendation 11.
13. That WETT funds a project to align the Warlpiri Theme Cycle to the Achievement Standards of the Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, Australian Curriculum.
14. That CLC CDU support staff improve communication to boarding schools about the availability of and application process for Boarding Support programs by raising the profile of WETT and this program.
15. That WETT continues to offer all students boarding support, allowing students to access funds at and for any secondary program outside of the Warlpiri communities.
16. That WETT funds up to five preferred 'Partner Boarding Schools' to provide increased support for students to remain at these schools.
17. That WETT funds a project to create a Warlpiri Handbook for Boarding Schools.
18. That WETT continues to support the current interstate visit program as is.
19. That WETT provides funding for additional targeted longer interstate or potentially intrastate visits for selected secondary-aged students to access intensive and specialised support.
20. That WETT continues to support the existing Youth Development program and scope greater collaboration with Learning Centres and potential new partners.

21. That WETT builds the sustainability of Learning Centres by redesigning the model to distribute the costs and delivery of learning and training.
22. That WETT funds the establishment of a Learning and Training Resource Broker to work across the four communities, working collaboratively with Learning Centre staff and other organisations to broker training and identify providers and funding opportunities.

## New programs

23. That WETT establishes a University Transition Support Fund to support Warlpiri students to access and complete their preferred higher education courses.
24. That WETT re-establishes links with Yipirinya, Ti Tree and Alekarenge schools to offer resources for the Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools program.
25. That WETT funds the establishment of a Warlpiri E-resource program to create apps and e-learning resources for all ages.
26. That WETT presents a co-investment package to the NT DoE to advance Warlpiri interests where there is mutual benefit.
27. That WETT explores options to a) expand support to Warlpiri in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Palmerston, and b) establish a Warlpiri Learning Centre in Alice Springs.

## Governance

28. That WETT better communicates its activities to the communities it works in and the organisations and stakeholders it partners with.
29. That the WETT Advisory Committee comprise 16, and that a quorum be a minimum of 10.
30. That current vacancies for Advisory Committee positions (to make up 16 members) be filled by a process of nomination and election in 2018–2019, and then every two to three years.
31. That proxies for all Advisory Committee members be formally identified and recognised with a clearly defined role.
32. That a governance training schedule for all WETT Advisory Committee members and proxies be developed, including induction processes for new members and proxies.



| Lajamanu School Country Visit 2008 (source Lajamanu School)



The WETT painting was created by WETT Advisory Committee members Yamurna Napurrurla Oldfield, Maisie Napaljarri Kitson and Barbara Napanangka Martin, in 2013 to tell the story of how WETT started and how it grew over the years.



## Introduction

The Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT) celebrated its tenth year in December 2015, marking an important moment to stop, look back, look forward and plan for the future. In the decade between 2005 and 2015, a group of committed Warlpiri educators along with the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation Directors formed the Trust, designed and implemented five program areas, forged partnerships and allocated \$22 million to ongoing, community-based learning, education and training programs for Warlpiri communities. This good-news story is little known but is one of remarkable innovation and determination, in contrast to the too common accounts and discourses of Aboriginal failure and deficit. News from Newmont Mining (previously Newmont Asia Pacific) in 2015 that the life of the mine had been extended by a decade to 2026 and that the WETT royalty payment would grow motivated the WETT Advisory Committee to invest in a strategic Review of the Trust and its programs.

The WETT Review Terms of Reference were set out by the Central Land Council Community Development Unit (CLC CDU). The Unit facilitates the processes of the Trust and administers its projects and partnerships through CLC's role as agents of Kurra (the traditional owners of the Granites gold mine and ultimate decision-makers for the allocation of WETT funds). The Terms provided the pathway to guide the reflection and assessment of WETT and its programs in line with their aims and in line with community aspirations over the last decade. They also provided a pathway to scope future options and recommendations for the next decade. A further goal of the Review was to investigate Warlpiri and other stakeholders' views of WETT and its programs and to raise awareness about WETT more broadly. Finally, the Review was also charged with considering sustainable governance arrangements for the Trust into the future.

# Review Terms of Reference and research questions

The Review Terms of Reference set out seven research questions. Following initial discussions with the Steering Group, these were adjusted to nine questions, as follow:

1. What did WETT set out to do, and to what extent has this been achieved?
2. What are the strengths and limitations of the current WETT model, including the programs and partnerships?
3. How can existing WETT programs and partnerships be strengthened?
4. How can WETT-funded programs be better linked to each other and to other programs to generate stronger education and learning outcomes?
5. What are the key elements of the current education, training and learning landscape in the Tanami, including Commonwealth and NT Government policy and service delivery by government and non-government organisations, that might influence WETT's future direction? What opportunities exist, and what are the limitations of current government policy?
6. What important education and learning gaps and opportunities exist that might lead to options for new WETT programs? To what extent do these align with Warlpiri aspirations?
7. How do the WETT Advisory Committee and Kurra WETT Directors respond to the aims of WETT?
8. How well does the current WETT Advisory Committee comprehensively represent the four communities, their demographics and projects?
9. How well will the current structure, processes and composition of the WETT Advisory Committee meet the strengths and needs for future WETT projects identified in the 2016-17 Review? What steps can be taken to address these findings, and what risks are involved?

The research questions provide the structure for this Review report, with responses to the research questions grouped in three Findings sections. Review Findings 1 addresses questions 1-4, Review Findings 2 addresses questions 5-7 and Review Findings 3 addresses questions 8 and 9. The findings sections are followed by a brief conclusion and a detailed discussion, including rationale for the 32 recommendations to the WETT Advisory Committee.

The full set of recommendations, their rationale and details such as data sources, anticipated outcomes, next steps and cost estimates are provided in Appendix 1. Potential project and program partners are detailed in Appendix 2.

# Review design and ethics

The purpose of the Review ‘is to undertake a process of reflection and assessment of WETT and its programs against their original aims and objectives and to scope future options and recommendations to inform strategic planning and decision-making around WETT and its programs’. The Review was to be participatory, drawing on a mix of quantitative and qualitative data, some of it as primary source data and some as secondary source data. A formative and collaborative process was carried out in four stages, each marked by a report back and review meeting with the WETT Advisory Committee. The fifth meeting was used to confirm and adjust recommendations. This design was to ensure that the WETT Advisory Committee had an ongoing overview of the Review process and its findings, and that its responses to these were incorporated into the Review research. The first stage involved a collaborative Review design, with the Advisory Committee highlighting focus areas and concerns. At the end of the second and third phases, the Review team shared preliminary findings with the WETT Advisory Committee, first from the review of WETT and government policy, then from community and stakeholder consultations. The final stage involved collaboration on shaping the report and recommendations to ensure that the findings and implications of the report are clear, comprehensive and form a suitable basis for strategic planning in the period 2017–2027.

The Review team has adopted evaluative strategies consistent with its scope and purpose and consistent with appropriate ethical and professional standards, particularly paying respect to the need for sensitivity to Warlpiri cultural norms and expectations (Australasian Evaluation Society Inc., 2013; Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2011). Ninti One Limited, as an organisation specialising in remote research and evaluation, has a strong commitment to ethical conduct in Aboriginal communities (Ninti One Limited, 2015). The strategies employed by the Review team include the following elements:

- Establishment of clear research questions (in this case provided by CLC)
- Adherence to ethical standards of research and evaluation practice
- Review of relevant literature and program-related source documentation
- Consideration of program theory, both retrospectively and forward-looking
- Application of appropriate data-gathering tools
- Application of rigorous and defensible qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques.

As the Review was designed as a participatory evaluative process where the academic researchers took seriously the need for reflexivity and cultural sensitivity (Nicholls, 2009) and saw the Committee as partners (Goodyear et al., 2014, p. 54), the following strategic elements were also included:

- Employment (where possible) of community-based researchers to assist with planning and data gathering
- Regular engagement with and feedback to the WETT Advisory Committee and a Review Steering Committee
- Involvement of the Steering Committee and members of the Advisory Committee in the formulation of recommendations
- A strong focus on hearing and prioritising Warlpiri voices and opinions in formulating recommendations.

The Review encompasses formative and summative components designed to reflect on what has been achieved and to look forward to inform the future directions of WETT programs. There is no single ‘best practice’ for conducting reviews, evaluations or research; rather, there are many approaches to choose from (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007), and the Review team has selected methods fit for purpose to meet the requirements of the Terms of Reference.

## Managing potential conflicts of interest

During the course of the Review, one of the Review team members (John Guenther) changed employers, from Flinders University to Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (Batchelor Institute). While his role at Batchelor did not include any involvement with operational matters relating to Batchelor’s contracts with WETT, to avoid any perceived or real conflict of interest or bias, Ninti One and the Review Steering Committee agreed that John’s role in the project would exclude any interviews with Learning Centre or Willowra Playgroup staff, or with managers in Batchelor Institute associated with these programs. All interviews with these stakeholders were conducted by Samantha Disbray. The survey instrument used with community members included a question about Learning Centres. With a few exceptions where individuals had no interest in Learning Centres, all surveys were therefore conducted by Samantha or one of our community researchers. John had no role in the analysis of data relating to Learning Centres or the Willowra playgroup.

## Data sources and collection

### Data gathered from the collaborative research cycle with the WETT Advisory Committee

A range of data were generated through four meetings with the WETT Advisory Committee and additional meetings with the Steering Committee. The data included meeting notes, planning documents and minutes. The focus of each meeting is shown in Table 1.



| Valerie Martin, Rita Brown, Jenny Timms at the WETT Strategic Planning Meeting, July 2016 (Source CLC)

Table 1. Meetings with WETT Advisory Committee and Review Steering Committee

Date	Focus
5 April 2016	WETT Advisory Committee meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priorities for the WETT Advisory Committee;</li> <li>• Review design and collaborative development of Review Project Plan</li> </ul>
12-14 July 2016	WETT Advisory Committee meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of WETT policy and government policy and Stage 1 report</li> <li>• Learning Centres – strengths and challenges</li> <li>• Future WETT governance</li> <li>• Planning for Stage 2</li> </ul>
27-29 September 2016	WETT Advisory Committee meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of community consultation data</li> <li>• Discussion of preliminary recommendations</li> <li>• Qualities for partners</li> <li>• Learning Centres – future partners and model</li> <li>• Professional learning for Warlpiri educators</li> <li>• Planning for final stage and report</li> </ul>
23 November 2016	Steering Committee meeting to present and discuss interim report
31 January and 28 February 2017	Meetings with Steering Committee and WETT Advisory Committee members, discussion of final report and draft recommendations
29-30 March 2017	WETT Advisory Committee meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop to present recommendations to and take feedback from the WETT Advisory Committee</li> </ul>

## Review of existing program and policy documentation

The Review team accessed over 170 existing program documents – including meeting documents, monitoring reports, partner reports and funding agreements – related directly to WETT programs. In addition, it reviewed 25 policy and program documents from other agencies and organisations.

## Community, partner and stakeholder consultations – tools and methods

The Review team undertook 38 days of community visits, with at least seven days in each of the four Warlpiri communities. It conducted 89 survey interviews and open-ended interviews with 41 community and WETT Program reference group members and Kurra Directors. The team had 12 days of meetings and consultations with the WETT Advisory Committee and the CLC Steering Committee. In addition, extensive consultations with non-Warlpiri stakeholders were undertaken, in interviews, meetings, phone calls and email exchanges.

## Survey

Participants in the survey interview were approached and, if they consented, were asked to talk to the researcher about the WETT programs in their community. Most interviews were carried out in English. Researchers used an A4 image of the WETT painting to start the conversation (see Figure 1). The researcher explained that the purpose of the interview was to help WETT review its programs because it has been going for 10 years, will continue to receive income from Newmont and wants to plan programs for the next 10 years. Respondents were asked if they knew the painting and knew about WETT. The researcher engaged the respondent in a discussion about the programs represented in the painting. This preliminary discussion activated people's knowledge of the WETT-funded programs and the previously funded Early Childhood programs (except the Willowra program). It provided respondents with some key information about WETT, the future of the Trust and the importance of their views in future planning.



Figure 1. Resource used to explain Review and trigger discussion about the WETT programs and future programs

The survey collected the following demographic information: the community where the respondent usually lives, the respondent's age and gender, how often the respondent or a family member attends or uses the program, and the respondent's involvement as a staff or community member in a WETT-supported project (questions 1-6).

The rest of the survey questions asked respondents about individual programs. To avoid the survey data being simply a 'tick-box' exercise, survey responses were generally collected in an interview style, with the survey guiding the structure of the interview. First, respondents were asked if they felt that individual programs were important to them. If a person did not consider the program important, the researcher moved to questions about the next program. This aspect of the survey was designed to allow respondents to choose which programs they wanted to give their views about. If they responded that the program was important, they were asked why; if their answers matched the predetermined responses, the researcher ticked these. The list is made up of program goals that WETT has set. This section of the survey was designed to test whether community goals for the programs align with WETT goals. Respondents could agree with, ignore or add further reasons. Points that respondents emphasised as important were written on their survey. They were also asked how the program or activity might be improved. These responses were recorded as accurately as possible and checked with the respondent. This approach allowed respondents to speak freely and generated 280 comments, some long, others short. In addition, respondents were asked in the survey interview open-ended questions about what additional learning programs would be good for their community and were given the opportunity to make any other comments they wished to contribute. Survey interviews generally took 30-45 minutes.

While the survey was an electronic survey, wi-fi was generally unreliable or unavailable. Therefore, the responses were collected on paper copies and the data entered into the survey tool to allow for automated collation and analysis.

## Interviews

In addition to survey interviews, 41 Warlpiri took part in individual or small group interviews. These included interviews with individual WETT Advisory Committee members, Kurra WETT Directors, community members, reference groups, program staff such as schools staff, reference groups and also groups of community members such as Community Development Program (CDP) workers and Women's Centre staff. These were open-ended interviews, which often began with the same protocol as the survey interviews, using the WETT painting to activate knowledge, contextualise the discussion and provide the interviewees with some information about the WETT Review and the future of the Trust.

## Overview of community consultation data

In total, 89 Warlpiri took part in an interview with the survey tool, and 41 took part in open-ended interviews. Five workshops with the WETT Advisory Committee took place across the research project, between April 2016 and March 2017. Table 2 provides the number of people interviewed in these two methods, by community and by gender.

Table 2. Community consultations

	Community				Total
	Lajamanu	Njirrpi	Yuendumu	Willowra	
Survey interview	19 (16 women, 3 men)	20 (17 women, 3 men)	28 (20 women, 8 men)	21 (15 women, 6 men)	<b>88</b> (68 women, 20 men)
Individual/ focus group interview	15 (7 women, 8 men)	7 (5 women, 2 men)	13 (5 women, 8 men)	6 (5 women, 1 man)	<b>41</b> (22 women, 19 men)
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b> (23 women, 11 men)	<b>27</b> (22 women, 5 men)	<b>41</b> (25 women, 16 men)	<b>27</b> (20 women, 7 men)	<b>129</b> (90 women, 39 men)

A subset of the Warlpiri people consulted for the Review were WETT Advisory Committee Members or Kurra WETT Directors. Table 3 sets out the number of people in these roles consulted for the Review. In addition, a small number of WETT Advisory Committee members (or proxies) who took part in collaborative workshops and meetings were not interviewed, but did provide input to the Review.

Five Kurra WETT Directors and nine WETT Advisory Committee members were interviewed for the Review.

The Review team sought to consult as widely as possible and gather perspectives from Warlpiri with varying degrees of connection to specific WETT-supported programs. Figure 2 presents a model of levels of connection, with those close to the WETT-supported programs such as the WETT Advisory Committee members, program staff and reference group members, then program participants, who have experience with the program as users, to a group referred to here as ‘community members’ who are less directly involved with WETT programs. They are neither staff, reference group members nor program users. In these four small communities, those who do not use a program themselves may have insight into the program through family members who are more involved. In addition, someone closely connected with one program may have little connection to other programs. In addition, three Warlpiri living in communities outside of the four communities have been interviewed.

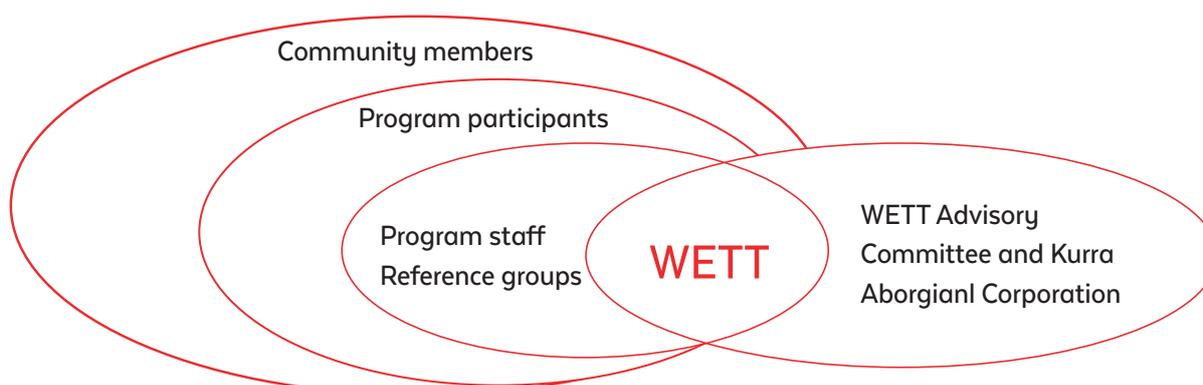


Figure 2. Relationships to and distance from WETT programs and Warlpiri people consulted for the WETT Review

The model did prove useful for the researchers in ensuring that views beyond those of program staff and reference group members were gathered. Nevertheless, as program staff, reference group members and program users (or caregivers of these), along with the WETT Advisory Committee are overwhelmingly women, there is a significant bias towards responses from women; 90 (70%) of the consultation participants were women and 39 (30%) men.

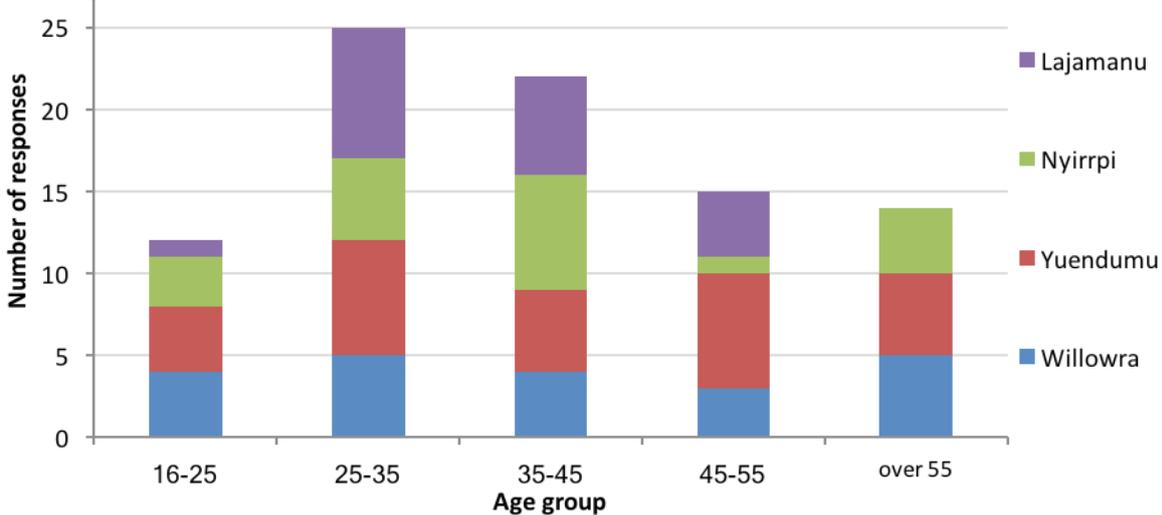


Figure 3. Ages of survey respondents by community

Partner and external organisation consultation data

Table 4 provides a list of partner organisations involved in consultations and the number of staff interviewed for the review.

Table 3. Partner consultations – non-Warlpiri interviewees

Partner	Number of non-Warlpiri interviewees
Batchelor Institute	6
Northern Territory Department of Education	18
Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation	7
Yirara College, St Johns College, Marrara Christian College, Kormilda College	4
Central Land Council	7
<b>Total interviewees</b>	<b>42</b>

A number of external stakeholders (listed below) were involved in consultations; 28 staff from these organisations were interviewed for the review.

- Willowra Clinic
- Nyirrpi Clinic
- Lajamanu Remote Jobs and Communities Program
- Yuendumu CDP Program

- Willowra CDP Program
- Nyirripi CDP Program World Vision Australia
- Yuendumu Children and Family Centre
- Remote Family Support Service, Yuendumu
- Life without Barriers, Lajamanu PAW Media
- Central Land Council

## Community researchers

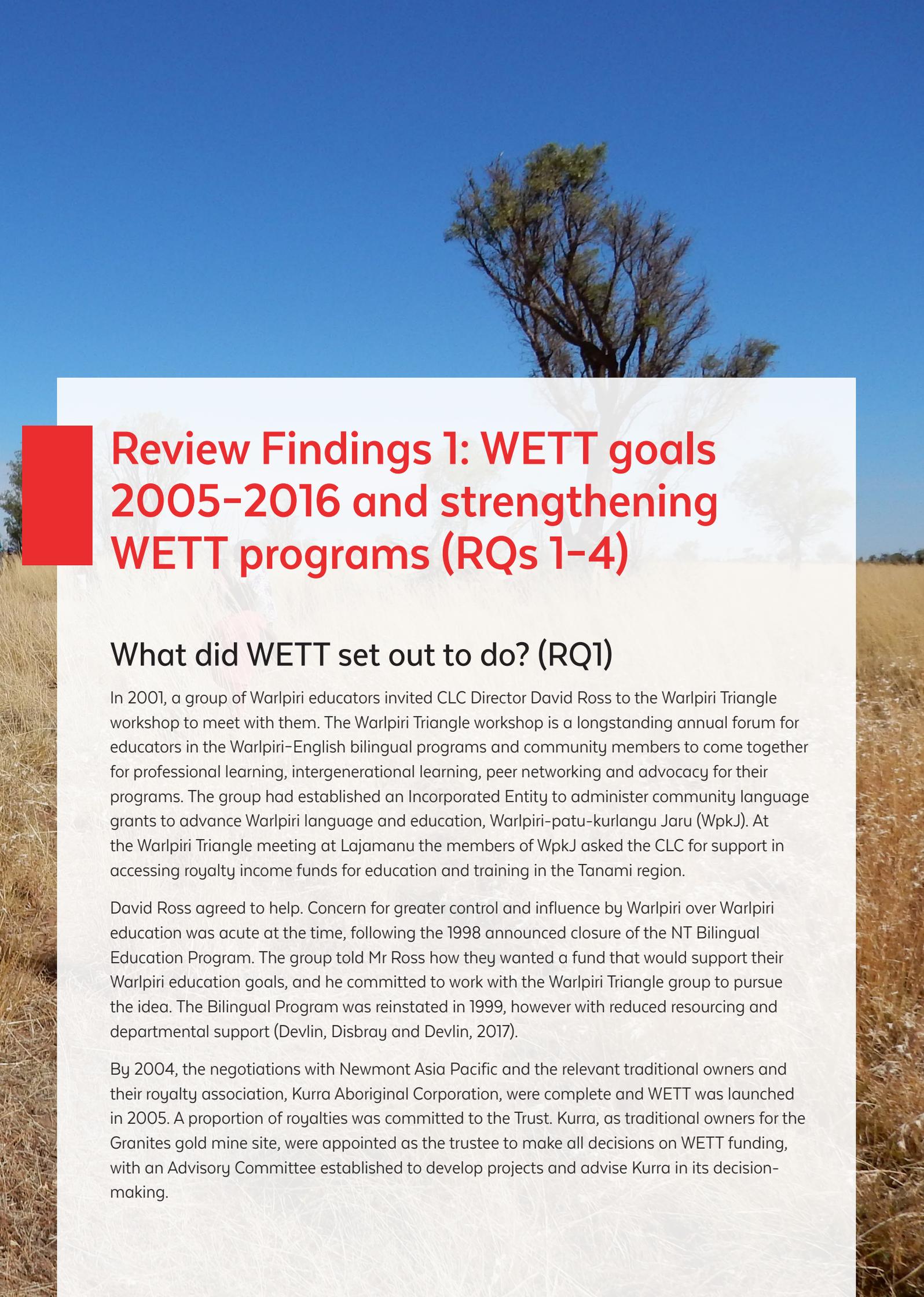
One intent of the participatory research design was to employ local community researchers to assist with several research tasks: helping design survey questions, administering surveys, identifying local contacts for interviews and promoting the Review within the communities. One of the spin-offs of this approach, used often by Ninti One in its evaluations, is that it builds research capacity within communities. The Review team attempted to identify potential local community researchers, firstly through recommendation from the Advisory Committee and through recommendations from Ninti One. From these recommendations, two people were engaged to assist with the research and they conducted a small number of interviews at Yuendumu. Two experienced community researchers from Ninti One's Alice Springs based team were also employed, one of whom was a Warlpiri speaker. These community researchers conducted surveys with approximately 40 community members in Yuendumu, Willowra and Nyirripi. This contribution to the review was very valuable. However, significant time investment was required to develop researcher capacity to conduct survey interviews.

The difficulties the team found in engaging local people as researchers reflects several factors that are worth considering for future evaluation activities. Firstly, people who would be otherwise willing to act as community researchers are often employed elsewhere and are therefore unavailable. Secondly, some people who would have been suitable for work as researchers were uncontactable. Thirdly, while the review team spent several weeks working in communities, the availability of local researchers often did not align with the team's availability. The sporadic nature of the work made it difficult for some people to commit when other commitments called them away. The Review team sought to balance the timelines for the project against the time required to develop relationships, liaise and collaborate with local researchers; this was challenging. For future practice, timelines for projects need to factor in considerable investment in skill development and collaborative mentoring to equip local researchers to conduct research independently, as well as potential delays and cancellations that occur when attempting to coordinate local and visiting researchers. The proposed development of an overarching monitoring and evaluation framework (Recommendation 5) should take this into consideration. Building local and on-going monitoring practices into services would relieve some of the challenges here. It would build greater capacity on the ground among program staff, reference group members and WETT Advisory Committee members to contribute to monitoring, evaluation and other research tasks.



| Jaru Learning Centre Mural Workshop, Yuendumu, 2014 (source WYDAC)





# Review Findings 1: WETT goals 2005–2016 and strengthening WETT programs (RQs 1-4)

## What did WETT set out to do? (RQ1)

In 2001, a group of Warlpiri educators invited CLC Director David Ross to the Warlpiri Triangle workshop to meet with them. The Warlpiri Triangle workshop is a longstanding annual forum for educators in the Warlpiri-English bilingual programs and community members to come together for professional learning, intergenerational learning, peer networking and advocacy for their programs. The group had established an Incorporated Entity to administer community language grants to advance Warlpiri language and education, Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru (WpkJ). At the Warlpiri Triangle meeting at Lajamanu the members of WpkJ asked the CLC for support in accessing royalty income funds for education and training in the Tanami region.

David Ross agreed to help. Concern for greater control and influence by Warlpiri over Warlpiri education was acute at the time, following the 1998 announced closure of the NT Bilingual Education Program. The group told Mr Ross how they wanted a fund that would support their Warlpiri education goals, and he committed to work with the Warlpiri Triangle group to pursue the idea. The Bilingual Program was reinstated in 1999, however with reduced resourcing and departmental support (Devlin, Disbray and Devlin, 2017).

By 2004, the negotiations with Newmont Asia Pacific and the relevant traditional owners and their royalty association, Kurra Aboriginal Corporation, were complete and WETT was launched in 2005. A proportion of royalties was committed to the Trust. Kurra, as traditional owners for the Granites gold mine site, were appointed as the trustee to make all decisions on WETT funding, with an Advisory Committee established to develop projects and advise Kurra in its decision-making.

The WETT Advisory Committee initially had a high proportion of non-Warlpiri as formal members of the committee. This included representatives from the NT and Commonwealth Departments of Education, the Central Land Council and Newmont Mining. Eight elected WpkJ members (two from each of the four Warlpiri communities) also attended meetings but only the Chairperson was a formal member of the Committee. As the Trust developed, so too did confidence and governance capacity of the Warlpiri members. It was decided that eight of the WpkJ participants, already pivotally involved in guiding the Advisory Committee would become formal members. The emergent partnership between Warlpiri educators, community members and the CLC and the formation of the Trust and its initiatives also contributed to the development of the CLC CDU. The Unit has grown out of the need to support local community development initiatives and community use of land-derived income (Campbell and Hunt, 2010; Hunt and Campbell, 2016). WETT is considered one of the flagship projects for the Unit.

## Development of programs

Two early consultations explored projects and models for WETT. In their 2005 consultancy, Angela Harrison and David Price explored community aspirations for learning and training and the scope of projects that the newly emerged Trust might fund. A key part of their consultation took place at the 2005 Warlpiri Triangle Workshop at Lajamanu:

*In all of the discussions we have had with Warlpiri people there is a strong emphasis placed on direct and pragmatic support for the passing on of Warlpiri law and tradition by the old people before they are lost to us. There is a recognition here of the need for Warlpiri young people to survive and thrive in the mainstream educational environment and the world of work. There is an underlying assumption that Warlpiri young people will only be able to do this if they are secure in terms of their identity and self-esteem. There was a sense of urgency expressed by most. The young people are seen to be facing a crisis not just a set of practical problems relating to education and employment. For this reason, we feel that WETT funds should be used imaginatively and innovatively to support the Warlpiri people's concerns relating to the maintenance of tradition and language as the foundation to success in the wider Kardiya world. (Harrison & Price, 2005; p. 4)*

Harrison and Price (2005) also surveyed the government policy landscape at the time and found its goals to be aimed at success in the mainstream, 'in the achievement of high levels of English literacy and oracy, at raising attendance and retention levels in the schools' (p. 4), with diminishing support for culture and language programs. They therefore recommended that 'WETT funds should be used to compensate for this lack of government willingness to assist in precisely those areas most emphasised by Warlpiri people when discussing the problems faced by their children and young people' (p. 4).

They identified nine proposals:

- Funding for four 4WD buses and trailers for use in the Warlpiri communities
- Country visits: support community participation in country visits, provide facilities at country visit sites
- Warlpiri Triangle / Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru office and position and four Local Education Liaison Workers, one for each community, to work with the Warlpiri-patu-

kurlangu Jaru worker, the Group School administration, Batchelor Institute training coordinator and the Warlpiri Triangle Office

- Half funding for a Warlpiri Regional Education and Training Coordinator position with Batchelor Institute
- Bilingual media: print media – Warlpiri Youth Newspaper and book production; new media – training in radio, TV and internet use through Warlpiri Media Association
- Community and School Council participation in Warlpiri Triangle meetings
- Study tours for Yapa to secondary education programs in other communities and funds for future developments with regards to secondary education
- Support the Centre for Appropriate Technology to deliver a range of training programs
- Scholarship fund to provide Higher Education Contribution Scheme support to those wanting to study interstate or in towns in the NT.

At the 2006 Warlpiri Triangle Workshop, CLC staff members Danielle Campbell and David Jagger held a meeting with workshop participants, some of whom were Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru members and advisers to the newly formed WETT Advisory Committee. They informed the group of the expenditures committed through the Trust. In 2006, funds were committed to the programs associated with language and culture in schools (books, vehicles and costs for country visits, elders' payments), the Warlpiri Triangle workshops and smaller Jinta Jarrimi workshops, as well as costs associated with an Executive Officer (Robert Hoogenraad) for Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru.

Danielle Campbell and David Jagger also shared the findings of the second consultative report, by Jerry Schwab from the Australian National University. Also in 2006, Schwab was commissioned to develop models for education and training programs for WETT, taking into account the Harrison and Price community consultation, innovative programs elsewhere and relevant government policy. Schwab (2006) recommended the development of five programs:

- Warlpiri Early Childhood Institute
- Warlpiri Parent Education and Parent Support program
- Warlpiri Youth New Media project
- Warlpiri Training-Through-Enterprise project
- A Warlpiri Learning Community.

All but the Training-Through-Enterprise project were pursued, along with the support for school country visits proposed in the Harrison and Price report. All five programs that developed in the following years continue to be supported. These are:

- Warlpiri Early Childhood Care and Development program
- Youth Development program
- Warlpiri Language and Culture Support – Country Visits and Elder Payments program
- WETT School Vehicles, and Bilingual Resource Development Unit support
- Warlpiri Secondary Student Support program – School Excursions and Boarding Support programs
- Community Learning Centre program.

# To what extent has WETT achieved its goals? (RQ1)

## Summary of achievements

WETT has achieved significant outcomes since its commencement in 2005.

The Trust and its programs have made a significant contribution to the vision held by long-term Warlpiri educators of community-designed, -led and funded education and training programs in the Warlpiri communities. In doing so, it has positioned itself as an advocate for these domains and achieved self-determination, particularly noteworthy over a period of government policy which has not supported Aboriginal self-determination.

WETT has formed and maintained a cohesive Advisory Committee, with transparent processes and highly motivated and well-informed members, who have demonstrated prudent and responsible financial management. The Committee has retained many foundation members, with the bulk of work carried out on an entirely voluntary basis.

Communities have services or levels of service they would not have otherwise had. These include youth services associated with Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC), Pintubi Anmatjere Warlpiri (PAW) Media and Learning Centres. The small community of Willowra has an Early Childhood program that would not have been possible without WETT. In schools, WETT has maintained the impetus for bilingual and bicultural learning, over a period marked by significant retreat and disinvestment by government. Across all communities, every student has access to an interstate excursion. Three Learning Centres have been built, and all four communities have Learning Centres in operation.

Figure 4 maps the inputs, causal mechanisms, processes and developmental outcomes to show which factors have contributed to the achievements shown in the right-hand column. A quantitative assessment of the achievements is difficult. In qualitative terms, however, we do have strong evidence to claim that without WETT, most achievements listed would not have been possible. Our evidence comes from an extensive analysis of program reports, interviews with community members and partner organisations, and through our consultations with the WETT Committee itself.

The top section of the figure relates to governance processes and outcomes, acknowledging the contributions of Newmont and the CLC. The net contribution of WETT in these areas has been to generate considerable self-determined power, improved social capital and improved economic capacity. We argue that these outcomes are possible because of the investment (\$22 million over 10 years) and the concomitant physical and social infrastructure that it has created.

The bottom section of the diagram shows the outcomes achieved through program partners. The justification for improved skill and employability is built on participation. The claim for other achievements is built on perceptions which are confirmed by triangulation from several perspectives.

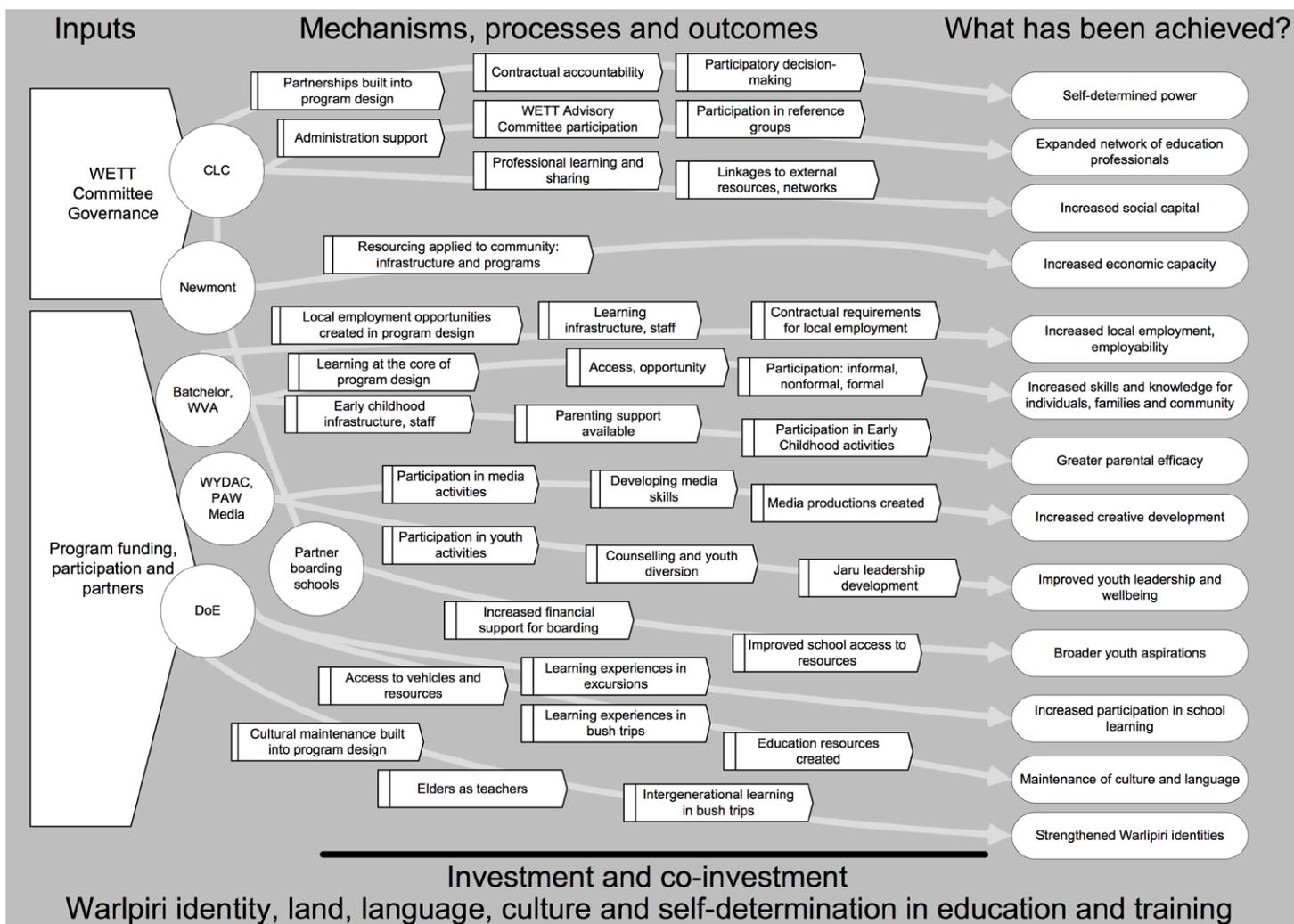


Figure 4. What has been achieved? Mechanisms, processes and intermediate outcomes.

## Summary of challenges

Figure 5 visually maps the causal factors that have inhibited WETT achieving some desirable outcomes. In summary, these are:

- A failure to effectively renew the Advisory Committee, leaving it vulnerable to reduced future capacity
- Difficulties achieving equitable distribution of resources across all communities
- Challenges in sustaining consistent provision of adult learning opportunities
- Limited access to a full range of learning opportunities for adults
- Limited uptake of early childhood learning opportunities
- Difficulties sustaining consistent provision of early childhood services
- Underutilisation of secondary, away from community resources
- Difficulties maintaining regular and frequent and country visits
- Limited influence to ensure Warlpiri aspirations in schools.

This list recognises and highlights the complexity and challenges of working with an array of partners in a complex and ever-changing policy environment and in a regional context where communities are separated by significant distance. Further, the partners themselves face challenges that are mostly beyond the control of WETT. Issues of staffing and staff turnover arose many times in consultations with partners. Advocacy has not been a priority for WETT to date, and this has resulted in partner priorities taking precedence over WETT priorities at times.



| Lajamanu Learning Centre library (source CLC)

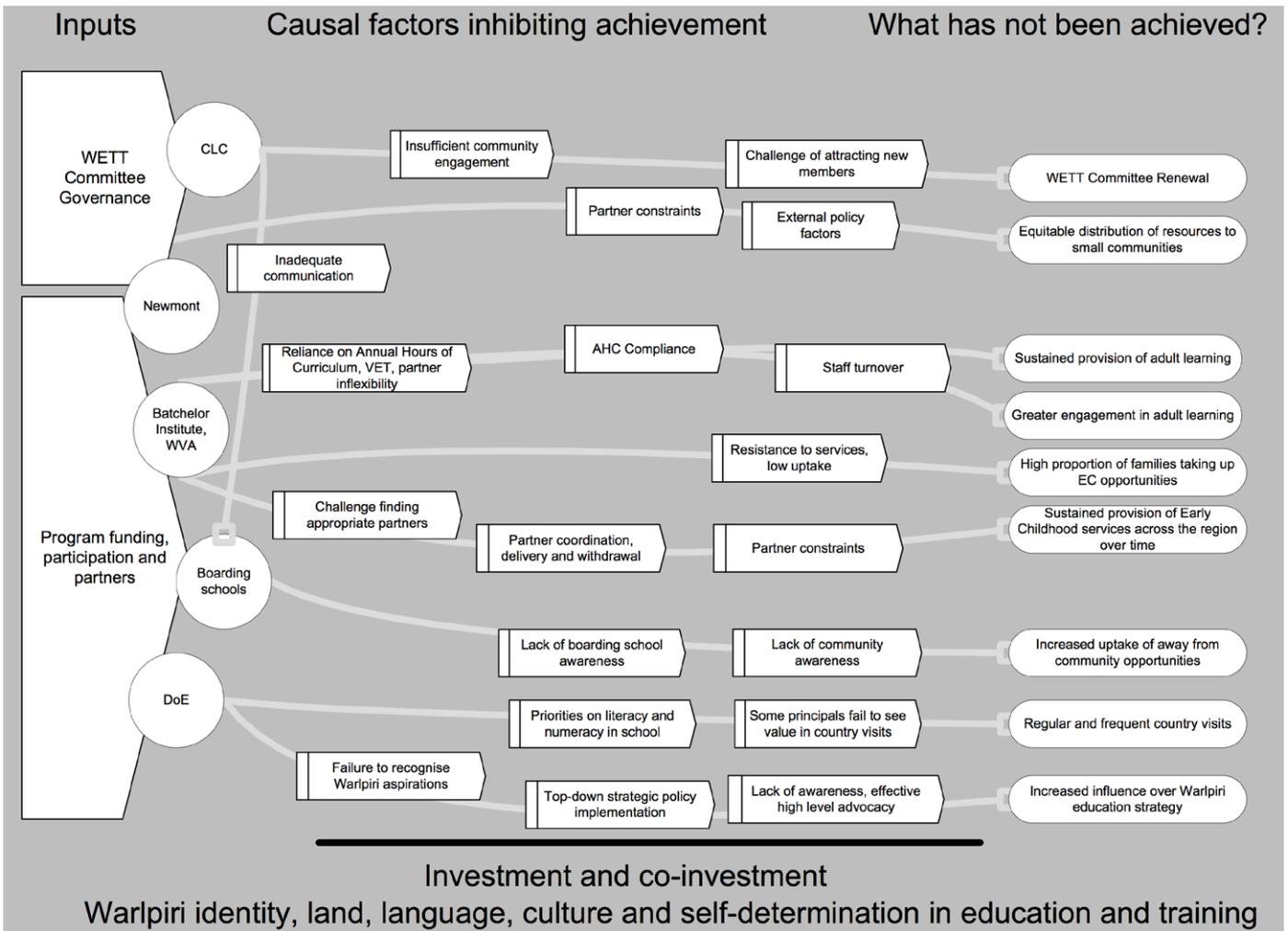


Figure 5. What has not been achieved? Causal factors mapped to partners and desired outcomes

## WETT policy and its alignment to community aspirations

The aspirations documented in the Harrison and Price report guided the initial design of the WETT-supported programs. Over time, the goals of the various programs have been made increasingly explicit in program documents such as funding agreements. The Review team worked with the WETT Advisory Committee to review each program and its goals to derive WETT policy. Once these policies and goals were confirmed, a survey was designed to see how often community members reported using WETT-supported or previously supported programs, how they felt the services were going in their community and, finally, what community members identified as important in each program area. Figures 6 to 8 show how the community use the WETT programs and perceive their progress and illustrate the continued close alignment between community aspirations and WETT policy.

Figure 6 shows the frequency of use (often, sometimes, in the past, never, don't know/want to say) by percentage of respondents.

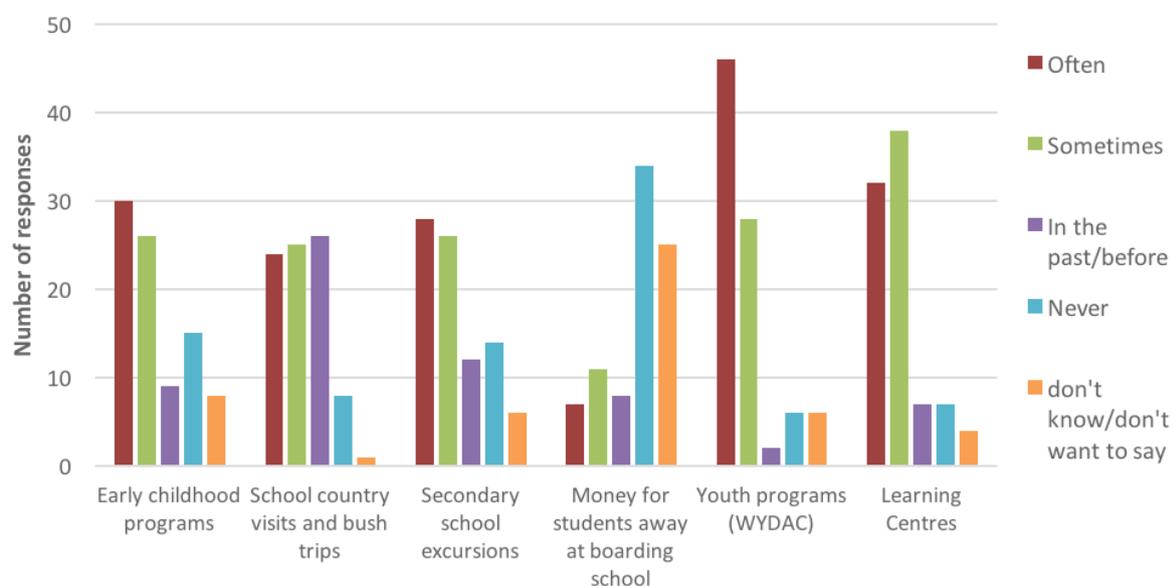


Figure 6. How often do you or your family join in with these programs? (88 respondents)

Most respondents reported that they or their family take part in all the WETT programs sometimes or often, with the exception of the Boarding Support program. In all communities, the Boarding Support program was reported as little used, or respondents responded with 'don't know, don't want to say'. Youth Development programs rated as most frequently used, and the proportion of responses 'very often' compared to 'sometimes' was higher in Yuendumu and Willowra than in Lajamanu and Nyirrpi. Lajamanu respondents reported involvement in school country visits in the past/before at higher rates than the other communities.

Figure 7 presents responses to the question, 'How are programs going in your community?' The data show that where respondents chose to rate the programs, they tended to respond with 'good or really good', except for the Boarding Support program. Few respondents in any community had prior knowledge or experience of this program. There was a higher incidence of rating the youth program 'Ok' at Lajamanu than at the other communities.

Yuendumu and Willowra respondents rated the performance of youth programs and Learning Centres in their communities more highly than did respondents from Nyirrpi and Lajamanu.

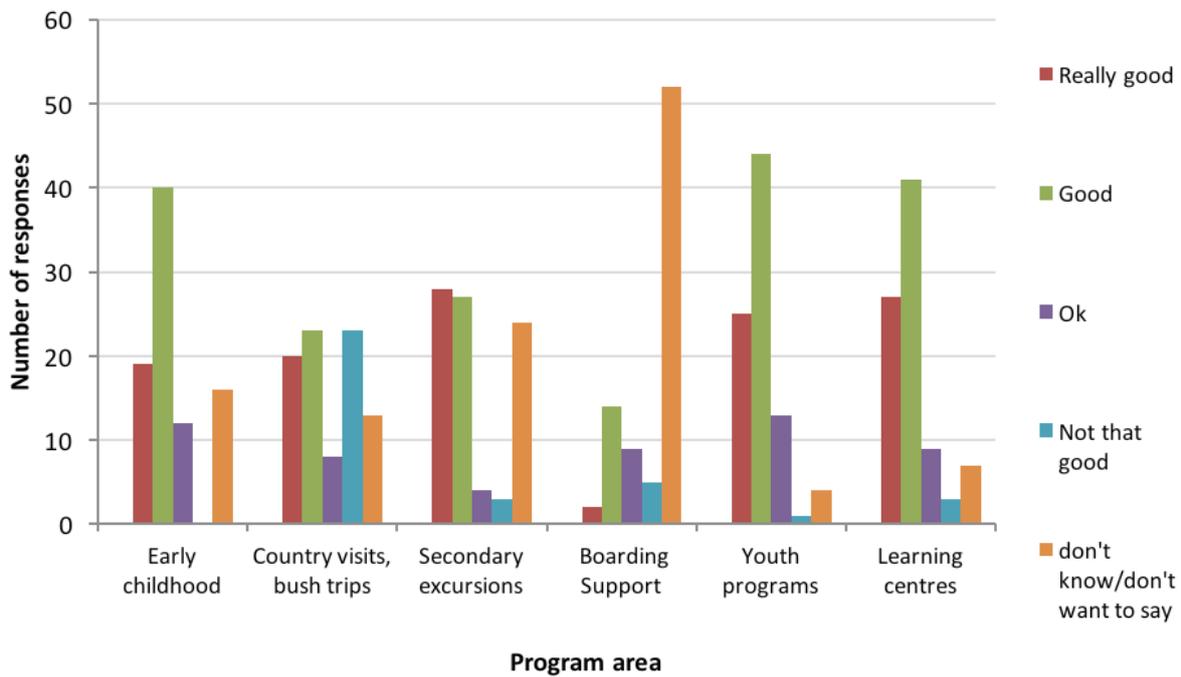


Figure 7. How are the programs in your community going? (88 respondents)

While overall the findings indicate satisfaction with WETT programs, many respondents said that they felt uninformed about WETT and what it does and expressed interest in knowing more.

Figure 8 shows the results of a content analysis of 326 comments coded for emergent themes arising from the community survey. While the chart shows the aggregated results, in many cases the themes were found in selected program areas. The following emerged:

**Learning about Warlpiri culture** (learning on country; learning about language and culture, grandfather’s country, songs and dance, stories; learning where you belong) was the most common theme, with 65 comments. This cut across several programs: early childhood, school country visits and bush trips and youth programs.

**Youth leadership, training and development** (the Jaru program, keep young people safe and out of trouble) was discussed most often in the context of Youth Development and Learning Centre programs; 40 comments discussed this theme.

**Employment and life pathways for Yapa** were identified as critical, mainly for young people, as employment in WETT-supported programs (particularly early childhood and Learning Centre programs) generally came through as an important priority. A total of 36 comments fell under this theme.

**Family strengthening and support** (34 comments) also emerged as a theme in relation to a range of programs; this is connected to intergenerational learning and support and family involvement in education. Concerns raised included nutrition, health, hygiene, family activities, involvement in FaFT, and playgroups.

Beyond these top four priorities, the remaining themes related to **adult and community learning opportunities** (28 comments), **intergenerational learning and involvement** (25), **information, communication, multimedia and technology access** (20), **encouraging education and preparing for boarding** (20), **bilingual literacy and both-ways learning** (19), **parent involvement in education** (15), **city trips, new experiences** (12) and **building confidence and discipline** (12 comments).

Overall, these themes show that Warlpiri culture and family are core mediators and drivers of learning, training, employment and life pathways for Warlpiri people. These critical data guide the strategic directions recommendations tabled at the end of this section.



Figure 8. Key themes from comments in survey data - number of mentions of theme in comments in survey interview data (89 respondents)

## Discussion and strategic recommendations

Based on its analysis of consultations with community members, the WETT Advisory Committee and the CLC Steering Committee, the Review makes five strategic recommendations to guide WETT in the coming decade.

**Vision and mission statements:** WETT should consider the themes that emerged from consultation data and develop vision and mission statements to clearly guide its direction and decision-making for the next 10 years (Recommendation 1). The statements will state the importance of Warlpiri language and culture and should position WETT’s work as an advocacy body for Warlpiri learning, education and training and not just as a funding body. This makes the actual work and goals of the WETT Advisory Committee more explicit and more effective. It is recommended that the vision and mission statements be communicated to stakeholders and partners; the formulation of these statements is therefore linked to Recommendation 3, which is concerned with the development and implementation of a communication strategy. It is also linked to Recommendation 5, which proposes the adoption of a monitoring and evaluation framework, for which the vision and mission statements will provide benchmarks.

**Implementation strategy:** The Review has observed the complexity of the WETT programs and partners and the work that the WETT Advisory Committee members and the CLC dedicate to its smooth running. Any significant departure from or expansion of the existing programs will require further research, networking and planning, as will the development and establishment of new program areas. To plan for the medium term and implement accepted recommendations, the Review recommends an implementation strategy is developed that articulates prioritised goals, logic and clear steps (Recommendation 2). The plan for developing this strategy will need to take a realistic view of the extended timelines required for WETT Advisory Committee deliberation, community and stakeholder consultation, partner negotiation and program establishment. An evaluation and monitoring framework should be developed in the early stages of the implementation strategy.

WETT has made significant investment in undertaking the Review, and additional resources are required for implementation, including the engagement of an Implementation Officer to coordinate this. This person would work with the WETT Advisory Committee, Kurra WETT Directors, CLC CDU and other staff and current and potential partners on program design and negotiation, potentially including the development of agreements with partners and Memoranda of Understanding where relevant. The Implementation Officer will also likely engage and monitor consultants to develop specific programs and projects. The position could be full time for at least one year or part time over a longer period.

**Greater advocacy and strategic engagement:** Recommendation 3 proposes that WETT strategically engage with and communicate its long-term vision to its partners to meet its long-term goals. This will involve closer collaboration and more proactive advocacy, particularly with Northern Territory Department of Education (NT DoE). This proposed communication strategy (Recommendation 28) sets out how to communicate with different stakeholders and partners and how to guide motivation for communication with different audiences. Under this recommendation, short-term actions such as the development of newsletters, a webpage and a Facebook page sit alongside longer term strategic meetings and the development of Memoranda of Understanding.

**Employment** has emerged as a key theme, and the Warlpiri educators in learning, education and training programs are crucial to the maintenance of Warlpiri language and culture. Recommendation 4 proposes that WETT set a Warlpiri employment strategy. This strategy may include goals for WETT-supported programs and indeed for the administration of the Trust, through the employment of WETT officers in each community.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** To ensure that programs are on track with overarching and specific program goals, Recommendation 5 calls for stronger processes of monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring reports are currently provided regularly by partners for all WETT programs. These reports largely fulfil the purposes of monitoring as outlined by Markiewicz and Patrick (2015), below:

*The predominant focus of monitoring is on tracking program implementation and progress, including program activities and processes, outputs produced, and initial outcomes achieved. Monitoring focuses on both what is being done in a program and how it is being done, serving as a means to identify any corrective action that is necessary. Predetermined*

*performance indicators and targets are often used as an important point of reference for monitoring. Monitoring is primarily used to support management and accountability purposes. (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2015, p. 10)*

However, there is currently no monitoring or evaluation framework to guide programs or the WETT Committee. Monitoring requirements are included in contracts largely for the purpose of accountability. There is no apparent rationale for the collection of data, and there is no connection between the outputs measured and the outcomes expected. This is where a good monitoring and evaluation framework can help.

*The value of a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework lies ... in the use of the information that it generates to track the progress of implementation, to identify results and account for funding provided, to improve program performance and enhance service delivery, to support learning and program development, and to inform policy development and decision-making. (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2015, p. 29)*

The Review proposes that WETT and the CLC CDU explore and select an overarching monitoring and evaluation framework. This framework will incorporate WETT's vision and mission statements and Warlpiri priorities and means of measurement. The framework should provide guidance on what is to be measured, how often, who by, how it fits with an overall theory of change or logic model, what the evaluation questions are, and how the results will be communicated and reported.

While the concept of monitoring is fairly straight forward, evaluation means different things to different people. At a generic level, evaluation is the 'systematic assessment of the worth or merit of an object's merit, worth, probity, feasibility, safety, significance, and/or equity' (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007, p. 13). Evaluation, then, is not just about assessing whether a program or policy was successful or not; it can encompass a broad range of elements that include the performance of partners, developmental aspects of a program (Patton, 2011), as well as participation and engagement in processes (Suárez-Herrera et al., 2009). Most importantly, it can be used as a means for critical reflection and planning for future action (Kemmis et al., 2013). Evaluation reports are particularly useful for documenting evidence about programs and often are used to justify applications for funding and to influence decisions (Patton, 2008, p. 146). Once designed, all new contracts for WETT-funded activities will include a requirement for monitoring and evaluation.

Participatory evaluations where action learning processes are applied are particularly useful for developing partnerships, so that shared goals and agreed actions lead to intended outcomes (Stringer, 2014). In the context of partnership development, we would encourage this kind of approach. The approach supports the goal for better advocacy. Participating partners use learning from evaluation to plan together, reflect on what has worked and what has not, and to decide on courses of action for the future (Kemmis et al., 2013). Evaluations carried out with these purposes in mind should be well planned, facilitated and iterative. A good monitoring and evaluation framework will consider all these aspects and provide structure for future data collection, contracts, program intent, partnerships and policies.

# Findings by Program: Strengths, limitations of and improvements to current programs and partnerships (RQs 2-4)

## Early Childhood program

### Summary

The Early Childhood program has been one of the most challenging programs, undergoing the most significant changes over the last 10 years. From 2008 to 2014, WETT partnered with World Vision Australia (WVA) to operate the program in the four communities, but its implementation was not consistent or sustained.

Since the end of the partnership between WVA and WETT in 2014, WETT support for Early Childhood in the Warlpiri communities has been limited to the Willowra Playgroup. This program, operated through a partnership with Batchelor Institute, is reasonably successful, valued by the community and has enjoyed stability since the centre opened in 2014. The program is reasonably well-attended, though not all families in the community use the service. As the Centre Coordinator is a Batchelor lecturer, training is embedded in practice in the centre and there has been a good synergy between the Learning Centre and Playgroup.



| Lajamanu Playgroup, 2011 (source World Vision)

Community consultations showed that Early Childhood services remain important to Warlpiri community members, and that people's aspirations align with those articulated by the WETT Advisory Committee. As the Early Childhood services delivered in three of the four communities are now not funded or guided by WETT, the Review consultations investigated aspirations, gaps in services to Warlpiri communities and potential WETT projects in the future. The consultations revealed a strong call for family support services, through parenting, health, wellbeing and education programs for young parents; there is scope for WETT in the next decade to address this area (see Recommendation 10). A key observation from the analysis of this program over time is its unsuitability to a single, centralised program and the need for WETT to undertake selective and strategic projects within the Early Childhood space, in partnership with local services. The Review also recommends the program be renamed to the 'Families and children Program', to better reflect its focus (Recommendation 6).

The partnership between WETT and WVA did lead to several positive practices in the four communities: the establishment of Early Childhood reference groups in each community and professional learning and networking opportunities through annual study tours, the Child Safety Workshops and participation at the SNAICC conference. These cross-community activities increase awareness of the needs of young children for a good start in life, build professional capacity and networks and support governance and advocacy for Warlpiri to guide the ways that early childhood services operate in the communities. Consultations with Early Childhood staff and stakeholders identified these practices as worthwhile and desirable into the future (see Recommendation 9). While awareness, professional capacity and networks have increased through these activities, there is less evidence of impact on governance and advocacy. These practices have been maintained by WVA since the partnership between WVA and WETT ended in 2014. However, WVA announced in 2016 that it would end this program in Central Australia in 2017, a key challenge is to identify a strategy and/or partner to continue these activities. The Willowra Playgroup is currently operated by Batchelor Institute, however WVA contributes some funding to staffing costs at Willowra. An alternative funding source will be required.

## Looking back

The Early Childhood program began with a partnership between WETT and WVA. WETT committed \$2.8 million over the first three years (2008–2010) and further funds between 2011 and 2014 to this partnership (Kelly, 2012, p. 14). The regional Early Childhood program under the WETT and WVA ended in 2014, with WVA fully funding its regional Early Childhood governance program until its decision in 2016 to cease its Early Childhood program in Central Australia

According to the first progress report (Saggers et al., 2010, p. 2) the stated goal of the Warlpiri Early Childhood program was to:

*... improve the health and well-being of children aged 0–5 years by building a foundation for children to reach their social, intellectual, spiritual and physical needs through support of parents and carers and better early childhood services, in four Warlpiri communities.*

This broad goal remained as the guiding statement for the six years of the partnership. The intended outcomes for the program to achieve this included:

- Outcome 1: Training and support for parents and carers that enhances the health and wellbeing of children aged 0–5
- Outcome 2: Increasing capacity of Early Childhood centres, through improved infrastructure, training, local curriculum and learning programs
- Outcome 3: Increased capacity of Warlpiri community members to effectively govern Early Childhood programs within their community and the region
- Outcome 4: Improved learning among the Early Childhood Development sector in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Australia.

### Outcome 1 Performance

Despite various projects and activities, including at times intensive support for local playgroups and liaison with clinics, WVA struggled to sustain support for programs designed for parents and carers to enhance the health and wellbeing of children aged 0–5. Participation was consistently low, for a range of local reasons such as poor facilities, irregular programs, staff changes and community conflict. Some programs were designed specifically for men, and reports note that attempts to partner with organisations to develop such programs had mixed results (Saggers et al., 2011, p. 8). The 2012 and 2013 monitoring reports (Kelly, 2012, 2013) found that both the WVA model and its lack of differentiation for the distinct histories, needs and infrastructure of the four communities were also responsible for the low outcomes.

The early years of the program saw involvement from clinics and other health services in some communities. There were effective collaborations with the remote public health nutritionist or the nurse at Yuendumu, Willowra and Nyirrpi (Saggers et al., 2011, p. 32), although constant re-establishment and liaison were required, and this was not sustained (Armstrong et al., 2013, p. 7). This was in part due to the drive-in/drive-out status of WVA's community officers and changes in staffing in other organisations.



| Willowra Playgroup 2016 (source CLC)

## Outcome 2 Performance

In 2008 when the partnership began, early childhood services were offered only in Yuendumu. Over time, the shires, the NT DoE and Life without Barriers (Lajamanu) began providing Early Childhood services in all but Willowra. At Willowra, WETT and its partners obtained funding for the custom-built centre that houses the Playgroup. It is located beside the Learning Centre and Youth Centre, further WETT initiatives, achieving a community-designed education precinct. Recent program reports from the current operational partner, Batchelor Institute indicate that this program is beginning to consolidate, with strong Yapa staff engagement, ongoing training and a range of learning activities for children and carers (Noe & Maughan, 2015, 2016).

At Nyirrpi a creche program has operated only intermittently, with Central Desert Shire operating the program initially, with support from World Vision. More recently the NT DoE has taken responsibility, and oversaw the delivery of a custom-built facility. Unfortunately, there is no sustainable operating budget for managing the centre and towards the end of the Review, it was closed by NT DoE. The CLC CDU are in discussions with NT DoE about its future. The provision of a Families as First Teachers program, supported or extended from the Yuendumu Children and Families Centre may provide the most effective solution for Nyirrpi.

Table 5 shows the provision of Early Childhood services in the four communities. In addition, the Families as First Teachers (FaFT) program was introduced and delivered through the NT DoE in Yuendumu and Lajamanu. No close link between WETT and any of these programs has been fostered, despite efforts by staff from WVA and the CLC CDU. As a result, the achievement of goals such as the inclusion of first language and culture activities and learning is left to the discretion of individual services, with varying levels of engagement with local Early Childhood reference groups.

Table 4. Current Early Childhood services and facilities, by community, 2017

Location	Services
Lajamanu	FaFT, NT DoE, with support for local playgroup. Life without Barriers childcare centre. New purpose-built centre, with local employment.
Nyirrpi	Crèche funded and supported by Nyirrpi School; previously supported by Central Desert Shire. Provides crèche, employment for local staff. New purpose-built site for crèche, but there are challenges keeping it open. It has not opened in 2017, and there is no foreseeable date for reopening at present.
Willowra	Playgroup, funded by WETT, WVA and Batchelor Institute; operated by Batchelor Institute. Provides playgroup, transition to school, employment for local staff, training and community education. Purpose-built building for playgroup.
Yuendumu	FaFT (operates from Child and Family Centre) NT DoE Child and Family Centre – child care, community education, nutrition programs. New purpose-built centre. Services include playgroup, child care, employment for local staff, child nurse, training and community education. New purpose-built building for playgroup.

Under the partnership with WVA and WETT, training services for Willowra, Nyirripi and Yuendumu staff were bought in, initially at great cost, from Central TAFE, Western Australia. Three years into the program 15 staff had graduated with a Certificate I or II in Children's Services, and several students were enrolled in these and Certificate III programs. As this arrangement was cost-prohibitive over the long term, other arrangements were put in place after 2012. These included a (short-term) community-based Early Childhood trainer funded by NT DoE (Saggers et al., 2011, p. 17) and an NT DoE-WETT collaboration to provide training through a visiting Batchelor Institute lecturer in Lajamanu and with some support from the Community Learning Centre Coordinator (Armstrong et al., 2013, p. 5). In 2016, Batchelor Institute supported students in Yuendumu, with Nyirripi Early Childhood workers joining some of the training; however, this arrangement is not currently in place.

### Outcomes 3 and 4 Performance

The establishment of community reference groups, provision of professional learning and networking opportunities have been achieved and sustained over time. There was some evidence of increased capacity of Warlpiri community members to effectively govern or guide Early Childhood programs within their community and the region.

In sum, WETT made a significant financial investment into Early Childhood services in the four communities between 2008 and 2013 in its partnership with WVA. Yet WETT policy implementation proved challenging across the four Warlpiri communities. WVA struggled to provide a nuanced approach to the different situations, needs and range of stakeholders in the four communities and to attract and retain visiting and local staff (Kelly, 2013, p. 12). In addition, the Early Childhood space came to be quickly populated with a complex range of stakeholders from service, health and training providers, with whom relationships and collaborations needed to be fostered. The provision of training was complicated and, for WETT, costly, as WVA's role was not operational and did not involve service provision or training delivery.

The Early Childhood program partnership with WVA shows that a regional approach does not respond well to the differences between the four communities and the realities on the ground (Armstrong et al., 2013, p. 19-31). This is important for thinking about how WETT partners work with each other and with other organisations in Warlpiri communities.



### Early Childhood consultation research and findings

Although WETT's support for a broad ranging Early Childhood program ceased in 2014, workshops with the Advisory Committee revealed its clear commitment to responsive Early Childhood services in the Warlpiri region. This, along with WVA's announcement that it will withdraw from Central Australia in 2017, prompted the Review to investigate community and stakeholder attitudes to Early Childhood services and identify potential opportunities as part of a long-term Early Childhood strategy for WETT.

| Lajamanu playgroup 2011 (source World Vision)

The Review team spoke with staff in Early Childhood programs and reference group members in all four communities and carried out survey interviews about the value of Early Childhood services with 65 community members. Staff and reference group members were concerned about the pending withdrawal of WVA and about how to continue the support that WVA currently provides. The work to date has spurred the development and consolidation of a network of increasingly professionalised Early Childhood staff and reference group members. Its continuation could yield significant results, though this network currently relies on outside support from WVA officers, with some local liaison staff.

*The reference group should stay active. We need to have a meeting every month. It's good for reference groups to share with other reference groups. I have never visited Nyirрпи Playgroup. This is the first time I have heard about how their playgroup is going. It was really good getting together with Nyirрпи and Yuendumu Early Childhood reference groups and workers. We should see the other centres.*

(Early Childhood reference group member from Willowra, after the 2016 Child Safety Weekend)

*Playgroup is really good. It has lots of Yapa workers, young women learning about early childhood and getting really strong. More families should come. They need to play with kids, for their brain development. It's really important to give them a good start for school.*

(Senior Early Childhood reference group member, Willowra)

The Review team made sure that community members were aware that WETT had established a partnership with WVA to support Warlpiri goals for Early Childhood, that the partnership had ended, and that although WVA continued to support the initiatives, it would soon be ceasing its involvement. The team also stressed that WETT does not currently fund services, except the Willowra Playgroup. Where interviewees already had some knowledge of the partnership with WVA and the ongoing work by WVA, there was some discussion of the possible future role for WETT. There were few such cases. While the team asked each survey interviewee whether they were a member of a reference group, it did not ask about respondent's awareness of specific reference groups. Some respondents not directly involved with an Early Childhood reference group were aware of their existence through family or their own use of the service.

The survey interviews looked broadly at what community members felt were important about Early Childhood programs and rated how they thought they were going and could be improved.

*Kids can learn and it helps them to go to school. They like Warlpiri singing with Nangala. They like to play, and it's good for families to come and they can play here with kids and all the toys. No nurse, but it would be good to have a nurse come and check up and tell mothers about health and nutrition.*

(Nyirрпи resident and Early Childhood worker, community meeting)

Early Childhood services were rated as important by 80% of survey respondents. These participants rated important aspects of the Early Childhood programs in fairly uniform ways across the four communities (see Figure 9).

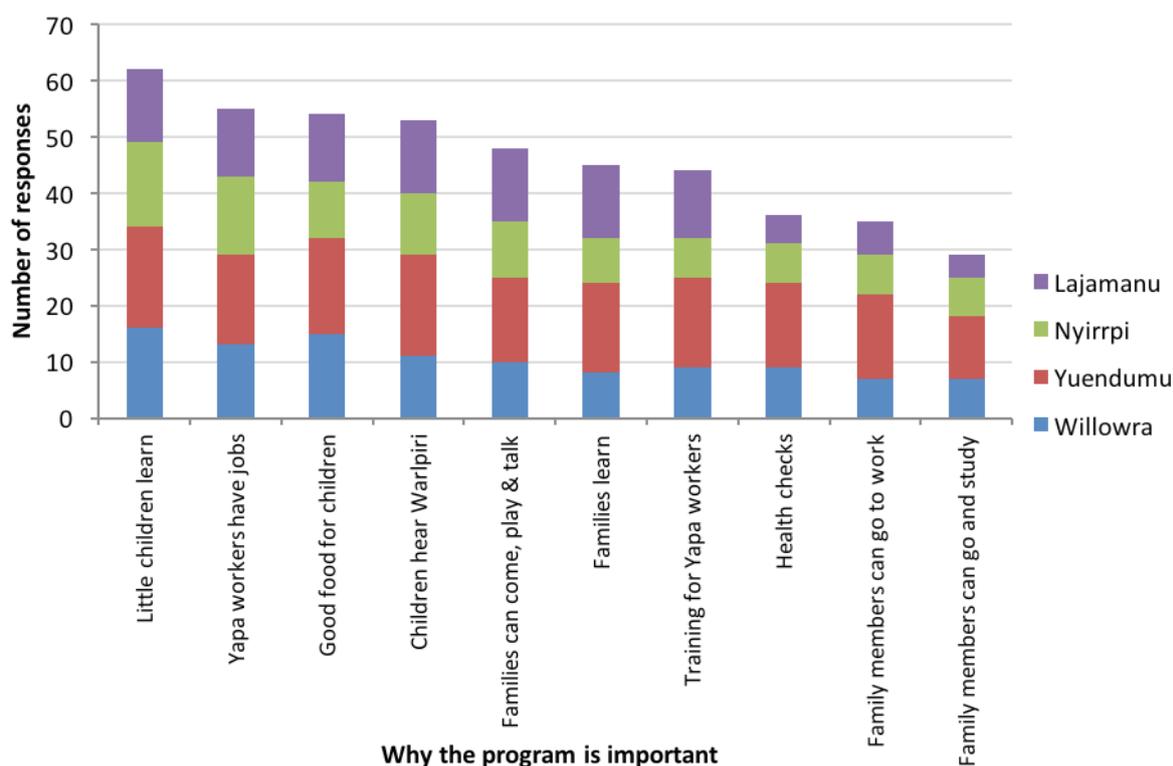


Figure 9. Why is the Early Childhood program important to you? (65 respondents)

The open-ended questions showed that school readiness for young children and local employment were the most frequently given reasons for the importance of Early Childhood programs. The lack of participation by families and the need to foster the local workforce were also seen as important issues. Other highly valued goals were children hearing Warlpiri and community members feeling welcome to spend time with their children in the centres. Many comments raised concerns about staffing: not enough Yapa workers or a lack of regular attendance; the need for a Kardiya coordinator (at Nyirрпи). Nutrition was also frequently marked as important, in the survey responses and in comments, where health more broadly was included as part of school readiness and a good start. A broader theme of strengthening families also emerged from the comments. Concern was raised in most communities about the lack of involvement by families in Early Childhood programs and the benefits that their promotion would bring:

*Good to have old and middle age people come and tell children stories. We should have more FaFT workers. More young women should do training. Some start but don't keep going. We have some really good young ones coming up; we need to support them really well.*

(Lajamanu resident, survey interview)

*We talk Warlpiri to little kids and they learn really strong. They are starting to pick up English too. We want little ones to learn to develop their brains. We have good nutrition and a little clinic if they are sick. Most mums bring their kids for immunisation. We had a little party for the immunisations; it was good because families came and listened and learned and had a good time with the kids. But most mothers don't bring their kids to playgroup or child care. We have to do more to encourage them to come so kids don't miss out. Cindy does training for Yapa staff.*

(Yuendumu resident and Early Childhood worker, survey interview)

Willowra Playgroup, the only WETT-funded Early Childhood program, was rated good or very good by 80% of respondents to the survey. Interview data from the Early Childhood reference group members and centre coordinator, document analysis and observation showed that the program has contributed to the school readiness of the children who regularly attend the service. Also, the pilot transition-to-school program has provided casual income and work practice development among a range of women, particularly young women, and there have been some training completions. Some concerns were raised: about lack of Yapa staff at times, families not always accompanying children, and many families not bringing children. However, overall it operates with a reasonably regular pool of casual staff, and families are getting the message that children at playgroup must be accompanied. Unfortunately, no data are available on the families not attending the centre, although the centre coordinator did report that more families were beginning to use the centre in 2016.

Willowra Playgroup is structured to provide on-site training, with an embedded trainer as coordinator employed through the partnership with Batchelor Institute. While on-the-job training is part of the daily activity according to the Playgroup reporting (Noe & Maughan, 2015, 2016), in practice, Fridays – when the centre is closed to children – is dedicated to training. Completions are very low, which is a matter of concern, given the investment by WETT in the trainer and the consistency of employment by some of the workers. Longer term observations and staff self-reporting show incremental skill development. Yet in the reporting period April–September 2015, two staff members completed one unit each; in October 2015 – February 2016, one staff member completed one unit; and between January and June 2016, no completions were recorded. The centre coordinator noted in this last report, almost two years into her service at Willowra, that the Friday training session is sporadically attended (Noe, 2016), and that block delivery mode, with resultant closure of the centre might work better. No mention was made of on-the-job assessment of competency, which one could reasonably expect for vocational certificates at levels II or III. Certificate completions could be greater with a portfolio and a more flexible workplace competency model. However, it should be noted that employment patterns in Warlpiri communities overall, and among the casual pool of workers at Willowra Playgroup, are often stop-start, with staff moving due to family duties, family crises and/or into other employment; workplace experiences, habits and skills are not wasted.

In the past, the Playgroup has collaborated with Willowra School, with a weekly visit by 4-year-olds to the school as a transition-to-school program. Fostering such links is important for achieving school readiness. As Warlpiri is taught at Willowra School, greater use should be made of the extensive range of books and songs in Warlpiri in the Playgroup. In addition, community members and staff were keen for the children to spend time on bush trips, which previously were organised by the WVA officer.

Despite considerable cost and effort, to date no sustained model of training is available in three of the Warlpiri communities. At Lajamanu Childcare Centre and the Yuendumu FaFT program, staff are undertaking training in the Abecedarian program; however, this early literacy engagement strategy does not cover all areas of Early Childhood work, such as child development, health, nutrition and safety or play-based learning. There is no reflection on nor planning for language development. While this is important in all settings, at Lajamanu it is particularly so, given the dynamic and multilingual setting.

Throughout the review, WETT Advisory Committee and community members raised concern for young families. This was not specifically within the discussions or interviews about Early Childhood services but was broader, touching on themes of positive life choices, mental health, wellbeing and positive parenting among young people as being pivotal to young children.

*But we are worried about young people. They do what they want. They are getting married and having children. We need good programs for them. We want them to be strong adults and strong parents. When they are parents, we want good programs to help them, like Andrea (WYDAC, Yuendumu) was talking.*

(Willowra resident, interview)

*They really need to have mental health support for young people, drug and alcohol services, not just when they get in trouble with police, all the time. Help with families, young mothers, make them strong and get them busy, not sitting around feeling sad and bored.*

(Lajamanu Early Childhood reference group member, survey interview)

*Waltja used to be strong in Nyirrpi. Strong Women, Strong Babies program. They used to support Early Childhood bush trips - long time ago. Now they just support the old people's centre. Maybe they can help out in other ways in Nyirrpi. Maybe more support for young mothers, women's health workshops, bush medicine, take old people and others for bush trips.*

(Nyirrpi Early Childhood reference group and staff member, meeting minutes)

Family support is a goal for the Family and Children's Centre at Yuendumu, though program delivery has been limited. At Yuendumu, WYDAC ran a Parent and Community Engagement (PACE) program that involved innovative community engagement with the school through



family-based activities and multimedia projects. It was unsuccessful in accessing funds to expand the program to the other communities, but with further grants funding ran a Young Mother's program with red dust role models, focusing on young mothers. One output is the short film Kurduku Palangu (see Red Dust Role Models, 2017)

## Discussion and recommendations

Many community members, staff and reference group members value Early Childhood programs for their role in preparing children for school readiness, involving families in early learning, employing local staff, for the good of the children and their early Warlpiri language development, for the good of families to feel welcome, and for the financial advancement of staff and the community. Staff and reference group members see the value of the governance, professional and community learning and networking opportunities of WETT and WVA's contributions. These areas offer important ways for Warlpiri community members and WETT to influence Early Childhood services, which are operated independently of WETT. These areas should be part of WETT's ongoing involvement. Training in Early Childhood was also raised in community consultations. Finally, parenting support and engagement to improve child health and wellbeing, the first goal in the initial Early Childhood program design, are not systematically addressed in current programs.

To address these aspects of Early Childhood services in the future, several recommendations have been developed. Recommendation 6 proposes a change of name to the 'Families and children' program area to consolidate its programs and encompass family support. This will align the program better with government policy and help make WETT's contribution to this area more transparent to government. WETT should use its financial contributions to exercise leverage for co-investment from government, for the Willowra Playgroup and for Nyirrpi, as these communities are disadvantaged in early childhood delivery as they are not growth towns. In consultations with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, willingness to support early childhood and governance initiatives was expressed. Follow-up on this is recommended as part of Recommendation 3. Recommendations 7 and 8 address the future of the Willowra Playgroup. This program should be maintained, with support for the reference group included in the coordinator role and clear instruction that the reference group and coordinator work closely together to guide the direction of the centre. The Review recommends that WETT fosters the partnership with Batchelor Institute to continue its operation of the Playgroup. However, in consultations with Batchelor some questions were raised as to the alignment of its strategic goals and the operation of a remote early childhood service. Exploration of new options for the centre may be required. The Review gives no definitive advice about the choice of partners for the Early Childhood program; further discussions with current and potential partners are required. This will include Children's Ground and Waltja. As NT DoE has a responsibility to ensure that all children have equal access to quality education, WETT may wish to direct its energy there.

Also at a strategic level, it is important that WETT support local efforts to develop governance to have influence over services in the other communities. Recommendation 9 addresses the void left by WVA by suggesting WETT provide funds to support the reference groups and professional networking. This would be through developing a fund for early childhood services to apply for a grant of up to \$40,000 per year to support reference group activities, staff training, networking across sites and outside of the region and attendance at the SNAICC conference or other professional development opportunities. Early Childhood services should be encouraged to liaise with the proposed Learning and Training Resource Broker (Recommendation 22) to submit a detailed proposal of anticipated activities. Reporting on this grant should include the members' names and activities of the reference group, including advocacy, community outreach and staff

mentoring and support. As funds for training, reference group support and travel are included in the budget for Willowra Playgroup (up to \$6,000), it should have access to a smaller proportion of the grant proposed.

Recommendation 10 addresses the community call for programs for young parents. This should be further discussed with WYDAC and the Yuendumu Learning Centre, which are currently actively seeking funding for such programs. Collaboration with WYDAC may make WYDAC's proposals more attractive to government. A key evaluation measure for the success of parenting programs should be their reach across the four communities, given the relatively high level of service in Yuendumu in comparison to the other communities.

Finally, it is interesting to look back to the Final report to the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust Advisory Committee: Options for education and training (Schwab, 2006, p. 60). At the time, an Early Childhood Institute was envisaged, which would provide professional training to Early Childhood staff, operate childcare centres and be affiliated with a university, which in partnership with Warlpiri would be 'directing a program of teaching and research focused on culturally appropriate, early school readiness and parent support'. Operating Early Childhood services in all four communities may not be viable, but the other aspects remain possible. The second recommendation of the report supported a Warlpiri Parent Education and Parent Support program, linked to the Early Childhood Institute. It envisaged a Warlpiri-designed curriculum or program for parents, and a centralised project officer to work with the four communities to advance it. It also proposed a Warlpiri-federal (potentially through the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet) and/or NT government partnership in the implementation of a program such as Project Head Start. The FaFT program has effectively taken up this role, but without a clear partnership with WETT or the Early Childhood reference groups. For further consideration of a similar project, see the Growing Up Children in Two Worlds project, funded through the Lowitja Institute (Appendix 2).



| Njirripi playgroup 2011 (source World Vision)

# Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools – Country Visits and Elder Payments program and Bilingual Resource Development program

## Summary

Respondents in all four communities were unequivocal about the significance of Warlpiri language and teaching in the Warlpiri schools, which the school Country Visits and Elder Payments program and Bilingual Resource Development program seek to support. Indeed, Warlpiri language and cultural learning emerged as the most frequent theme in all survey interview comments. While schools have not always made use of the funds available for them, these programs have kept Warlpiri language and culture on the agenda, at times of profound opposition at the systemic and/or local principal level.

In addition, funds are made available to support the Warlpiri Triangle and Jinta Jarrimi professional learning workshops, which operate through schools (\$10,000 for the annual Warlpiri Triangle and \$2,500 for the term-wise smaller meetings). The process for accessing the funds has at times been unclear to the NT DoE, and funds have remained unspent as a result. The process involves schools and/or the central office making payment for costs involved with the workshop (catering, charter flights, materials, consultants travel costs) and then claiming reimbursement from the CDU. To overcome the issue of changes to staff and a resultant loss of corporate knowledge at NT DoE, the CDU staff must maintain regular communication to ensure that the relevant NT DoE staff work with these arrangements. Finally, WETT purchased vehicles for use for language and culture activities and WETT-related business and has funded maintenance and repair of the vehicles.

Recommendation 11 proposes renaming the programs to Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools to better demonstrate its commitment to Warlpiri language and culture and its contribution to schools. Strengthening this program is dependent on a stronger partnership with the NT DoE, as stated in Recommendation 3. In line with this, the review recommends two new resource development projects: alignment of the Warlpiri Theme Cycle (the longstanding Warlpiri curriculum document) to the revised Northern Territory Curriculum for languages, and informed by the Australian Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages; and the development of e-resources in Warlpiri, for use in and outside schools (Recommendations 13 and 25).



## Looking back

The programs have been operating since 2006 and represent a small financial commitment in comparison to other WETT-supported programs. However, supporting language and culture teaching and learning in schools through bilingual, bicultural and biliterate teaching and learning programs is clearly a central and enduring WETT policy (Minutjukur et al., 2014).

The Country Visits and Elder Payments program is designed to reflect Warlpiri knowledge and pedagogy. Country visits are a central part of the teaching and learning in the Warlpiri Theme Cycle. It promotes intergenerational learning and applied and deeper cultural and ecological learning than is possible within classrooms. Country visits and the involvement of elders seek to break down barriers between schools and communities by bringing together community elders, families and non-local teaching staff in learning interactions. Under the program, schools currently have access to between \$15,000 (two smaller schools) and \$20,000 (two larger schools) each year.

There has been a low level of uptake of these funds in recent years, with some schools not undertaking school country visits nor involving elders in the school program. Several factors may contribute to this. Since the introduction of the First Four Hours English policy in 2009 (Department of Education and Training, 2008), there has been a further retreat from the Bilingual Education Program by the NT DoE then. Bush trips and country visits have been deemed less central to school programs. This top-down policy put pressure on principals, though local school policy and action can vary, which is both an opening and a source of vulnerability to the Country Visits and Elder Payments program. Recent policy, such as the publication of the 'Keeping Indigenous Language and Culture Strong' discussion paper (Northern Territory Department of Education, 2017) from the NT DoE is more supportive of language in schools, and this aligns with the strongest theme and aspiration that emerged from the WETT community and Advisory Committee consultations. On the ground, however, some principals and school staff are yet to be convinced of the worth of this program; this raises questions about who pays for what, who organises trips and where the money for resources and vehicles comes from. Another tension arises for school staff and bureaucrats who see country visits as eating into time that could otherwise be devoted to (English language) literacy and numeracy. The opportunities that flow out of the learning on country for meaningful 'red dirt' or two-way learning – potentially connecting in with rangers, environmental scientists and other specialists with expertise in supporting learning on-country activities – must be brought to the fore. As Yuendumu School is currently running a comprehensive Country Visits program, embedded in its curriculum, strong messages can be gleaned from this exemplar.

A further vulnerability to the program is the fact that many of the qualified Warlpiri teachers have retired in recent years, in particular in Lajamanu, and with them have gone the leadership and advocacy they exercised. In some schools, such as Nyirripi, there are times with very few Yapa staff. Thus, issues of program delivery intersect with issues such as secondary retention for a new cohort of teachers, workforce development and curriculum planning.

(previous page left) Lajamanu School Country Visit, 2010 (source Lajamanu school)

(middle) Lajamanu School Country Visit, 2010 (source Lajamanu school)

(right) Youth and Media Program, 2011 (source WYDAC)

While monitoring reports (Kelly 2011; 2012; 2013; 2015) indicate positive responses to the program, as do Warlpiri education workshop reports (Jinta Jarrimi and Warlpiri Triangle reports), especially from Warlpiri educators and community members, there is relatively little documentation for this program for WETT. The documentation from schools would ideally show the link between the country visit with elders from, and back into, the school program based on the Warlpiri Theme Cycle. No additional evaluation or review of the program, its goals, effectiveness or potential has been undertaken. It was identified in the 2014 monitoring report as an area of focus (Kelly, 2015, p. 5), but data were not collected in time for the report (p. 14).

Some schools have at times partnered with the CLC Rangers program and WYDAC for additional support for country visits (Kelly, 2011, p. 32, with reference to Lajamanu; Roche & Ensor, 2014, p. 42 with reference to Willowra). With respect to the CLC Rangers, this sort of partnership is documented in Northern and Southern Tanami Indigenous Area Protection Agreements and offers an important opening for consolidating this program as a formal school learning area. The development of the online resource 'Walyaku' (Central Land Council, n.d.) provides a valuable classroom resource for this. Roche and Ensor (2014, p. 42) have raised concern that shifting responsibility and coordination of this learning to out-of-school programs in the has both risks and limitations, such as their becoming marginalised in school programs, but this can be addressed. Certainly, there is evidence in other locations of highly successful partnership and learning programs (Disbray, 2014; Fogarty, 2013; Webb et al., 2013).

The NT DoE policy space for language and culture teaching and learning is somewhat unclear at present, as the Indigenous Education Review Strategy (Northern Territory Department of Education, 2015) does not recommend bilingual education. Yet in 2015, a manager of the Bilingual Education Program was appointed. In addition, several above-establishment positions have remained in the schools that had bilingual programs, throughout the various policy changes in recent decades. These include teacher-linguist positions at Willowra, Yuendumu and Lajamanu and the staff at the BRDU at Yuendumu.

In the document *A Share in the Future: Indigenous Education Strategy, 2015–2024*, there was also no mention of support for language and culture programs, yet the associated Implementation Plan 2015–2017 (Northern Territory Government, 2015a; p. 1), has 'develop and implement policy to guide the delivery of Aboriginal Languages and Culture programs in Northern Territory schools following national and NT policy'. Policy for Aboriginal language and culture programs is in development, and currently an NT customised version of the newly released Australian Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages is underway (Purdon, 2016); a workshop will take place in June 2017. In April 2017, a discussion paper to provide a basis for policy language and culture teaching in schools was released (Northern Territory Department of Education, 2017), but there is no indication of when a policy will follow. Finally, the Alice Springs Languages Centre has developed and is developing and piloting Certificates II and III in Applied Language, currently with Arrernte students in Alice Springs and Alyawarre students at Alparra (S. Moore [Assistant Principal Alice Springs Languages Centre] 9. May 2017. Pers. comm). These courses may provide opportunity in the future for Warlpiri students to gain vocational education and training (VET) qualifications valid towards school completions.

A draft Bilingual Education Policy has been circulated but its status remains unclear (K. McMahon [Manager Bilingual Education Programs, NT DoE] 1. Sept. 2016. Pers. comm). On the ground, schools such as Yirrkala and Shepherdson College have strengthened their bilingual programs in recent years, with a relaxation of the pressure imposed by the 2008 ‘First four hours English’ policy. Yuendumu School, under a proactive principal, has been consolidating its program since 2015; in 2017, the program is more comprehensive than it has been in 15 years. However, the current level of human resourcing for the program may not be sustained in the longer term, as the school has two above-establishment senior roles, as opposed to one allocated to other schools. One is the allocated teacher-linguist position, the other the linguist position, previously dedicated to language and culture support for the Central Australian region.

Back when the models for education and training programs were being developed for WETT (Schwab, 2006), the Language and Culture program was not included in the original list of recommended programs. It warned that ‘government should not be encouraged to cost shift programs that it should provide’ (p. 14). This is an important consideration, in terms of both the cost shifting element and a realistic view of what different parties feel the government ‘should provide’. The program is not costly, has high community support and should be promoted to NT DoE as an illustration of WETT’s commitment and contribution to education in the region.

Since 2007, WETT has contributed funds for the production and dissemination of books produced by the Bilingual Resource Development Unit (BRDU) at Yuendumu School (see Table 6).

Table 5. Funds provided for the Bilingual Resource Development Unit

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Amount (\$)	7,000	15,000 1,600*	15,000 1,600*	15,000 1,600*	15,000	15,000	15,000	16,000	10,000	10,000

\* Provision of books to Yuendumu Childcare Centre and Mt Theo program

The total amount is \$137,800, according to the five funding agreements cited.

In the early years of this program (2007–2009), the funds supported the digitisation and reformatting of many of the original black and white line-drawn productions created in the 1970s and 1980s. This rejuvenation work has slowed in recent years. However, the result is a digital collection of some 300 colourful, good production quality booklets. Having the collection digitally allows texts to be called up on computers and electronic whiteboards; in practice, however, this is limited by the lack of time dedicated to Warlpiri language teaching and learning and professional learning and support for Warlpiri educators to use technology in classrooms in most schools. No evaluation of this program has been undertaken, and it does not appear to be captured in monitoring reports. However, the BRDU has submitted reports for the program, with increasing detail and quality in 2016.

The BRDU continues to create new books, resources and reprint copies for Yuendumu and the other schools. Each term, copies of the books pertinent to the theme scheduled in the Warlpiri Theme Cycle are reprinted and distributed at Jinta Jarrimi and Warlpiri Triangle workshops. In 2016, the BRDU requested \$2,000 per year in additional funding to broaden its scope to develop e-resources. This is a positive move, in line with community consultations. Future funding

agreements should ensure that professional learning for use of e-resources for staff in all four communities is embedded in this work. A broader program of resource development, likely outside of the scope of the operations of the BRDU alone, is recommended (see Recommendation 25).

### Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools consultation research and findings

Teaching and learning Warlpiri language and culture in schools came through as a key priority in the community responses, across communities and in all age groups. Respondents rated the reasons they found this program important in similar proportions, across the four communities (see Figure 9). This program also attracted a high number of comments (61), with respondents keen to emphasise and reiterate the importance of cultural and intergenerational learning in school programs:

*When we take kids out bush they are learning as soon as we get there. They all find something and we teachers have to explain it to them: when, where, what. But we learn a lot from kids too when we are out; they teach us and [we] understand them. But we need to make sure we go with old people, learn a lot more from them, deeper.*

(Young educator from Yuendumu School)

*Learning from the old people, teaching, showing children rock art, water holes, bush food all important. Dance (ceremony). So young boys pass on knowledge as they grow older into men.*

*Dancing, little ones learn about things from elders, helps kids grow up telling stories.*

*Children learn jukurrpa.*

*Children learn about grandfather's and father's country. To learn jukurrpa, little boys and girls dance.*

(Survey interview responses from four Nyirrpi residents)



| Willowra Bush Camp 2011 (source Willowra School)

At Lajamanu, stronger support from the school and the potential for support from the CLC Rangers were raised. The support of schools, in particular school principals, was discussed as a major affordance or constraint affecting on-country visits and bush trips. This program is most effective when it is part of the broader school learning program. It has been a key and integrated component of the Warlpiri Theme Cycle. However, when there is no strong Warlpiri program, country visits, bush trips and the involvement of elders are unlikely to be a school priority, and there is little opportunity to maximise the learning that a one-off bush trip or country visit might provide.

*We should have country visits and bush trips as part of school. It's really important. Yapa need to speak up to the Kardiya at school, they need to get more involved and work together more. It's good to go camping on the weekend and at holidays, take old people to tell stories. We used to go out on Friday afternoons, take the different colour groups and show them their land, where the old people used to live out bush. Sometimes it makes them sad to think about how it was before. We all need to go and learn more about who the land belongs to so that it is straight.*

*School is not very good, not very responsive to the community and the community stay away. Yapa staff are not committed to their jobs there, there is no feeling of Two-Way, just one way. They don't do country visits or bush trips. Was really strong before, we learned a lot. Even had purlapa and yawulyu in the school grounds, now nothing. Not really strong at all. Not strong for language and not much effort to bring elders in. They are just stepping over Yapa.*

(Interview survey response from two Lajamanu residents)

The individual school dynamics are varied. Yuendumu School currently has a supportive principal, a linguist and a teacher-linguist to support the Warlpiri program. It has a well-resourced literacy production unit and is actively seeking to rebuild the bilingual program. Willowra, on the other hand, has an above-establishment teacher-linguist position assigned as it is recognised as operating a bilingual program, but this position is not used to support a bilingual program. The situation for Lajamanu is at times similar, and there is often little structured support for a Warlpiri program. In previous years, a productive relationship between the CLC Rangers and the school allowed a country visits program to take place in the secondary program, but the school leadership is no longer committed to this relationship. In recent years, there has been some collaboration with WYDAC and the CLC Rangers to support school country visits at Nyirрпи and Willowra, though this has been somewhat ad hoc.

Nyirрпи school has no teacher-linguist role, and has never been assigned this above-establishment position. It struggles to organise bush trips and country visits or deliver a sustained Warlpiri program. In the past, when a qualified Warlpiri teacher worked at the school, there was a stronger program. In 2016, Nyirрпи piggybacked on Yuendumu School's country visits, evidence that collaboration between schools can be spread to support this program. The long-time principal at Nyirрпи school has shown commitment to Warlpiri learning and welcomes community involvement in the school but stresses the low level of resourcing for the school generally.

## Discussion and recommendations

The effectiveness of the Country Visits and Elder Payments program has been restricted by the limited influence WETT has over schools. Recommendation 3 seeks to address this by establishing a stronger and more explicit partnership with NT DoE. With respect to current policy, there is scope to better embed this program within policy for languages. The Implementation Plan 2015–2017 seeks to ‘[e]ngage communities, families and students through all stages of learning to improve outcomes in student attendance, wellbeing and achievement, including a community engagement charter to set the expectations for the relationship between schools and the communities’ (Northern Territory Government, 2015a: 1). A Share in the Future: Indigenous Education Strategy, 2015–2024 has no mention of community engagement beyond issues associated with attendance; however, recent policy announcements by the NT Chief Minister emphasise both the importance of responsive government and Aboriginal language and culture (Gunner, 2017).

As the BRDU is located at Yuendumu, which is well supported and staffed, it tends to service this school at a much higher level than the other schools. Evaluation of this WETT-funded program should ensure that there is equitable distribution of resources across the four schools.

Two new project areas are proposed in this program area. These are the e-resources project and the curriculum development project for the Warlpiri Theme Cycle. The e-resources project should begin with identifying a partner. PAW Media would be most suited, and would be able to develop it as a youth media project. The partner will need to conduct consultation with learning programs in the four communities to establish the different learning needs and interests for Early Childhood, primary, secondary/youth and adult learning. The most suitable platform is probably Android, though there may be access to Apple devices in some settings. On the basis of consultations, the partner will need to seek out a talking book interface and creation of a collection, based on existing resources, a song app, a dictionary app (perhaps drawing on the existing Kirrkirr frame) with word learning and spelling tasks and apps with presentation/interactive modes to deliver cultural learning. A summary of existing products, including ‘clean’ products – those that offer a shell for local content, is shown at Appendix 2. It is not recommended that resources are custom-built before thorough and extensive review of existing products (see Appendix 2 for a full review).

A curriculum development project is proposed, in part to align the Warlpiri Theme Cycle to the NT DoE adaption of the Australian Curriculum and to collate existing materials as part of the layer 2 (syllabus) for the Theme Cycle. This work should be carried out with extensive collaboration with Warlpiri educators and competent school staff, such as teacher-linguists, and in conjunction with the Indigenous Language and Culture support staff. However, given the existing workload of school staff and the specialist nature of curriculum mapping work, outside support may be required.

Finally, the Review found overall willingness from CLC Ranger programs to work with schools to support learning-on-country initiatives. While no recommendation is made, WETT, the CLC CDU and schools are encouraged to further pursue this potential.

## Warlpiri Secondary Student Support program – Away from community

### Summary

There is a lack of awareness among boarding schools and families about the Warlpiri Secondary Student Support program, resulting in a low uptake by schools. Nevertheless, community members and stakeholders believe the program is important. Those who were familiar with the program have accessed it and spoke positively of the opportunity it has provided to their family. Consultations highlighted the importance of secondary education away from Warlpiri communities and the perceived low numbers of Warlpiri students staying in boarding schools and completing schooling. This intersects with recent promotion in NT DoE policy and practice of secondary education through boarding schools for remote students. The Review has considered the importance of both local secondary learning and training options and the need to improve retention and completion of students undertaking secondary studies outside of the community. Recommendations 15, 16, 17 and 26 respond to this consideration.

In consultations about this program, community members talked broadly about boarding school education. Some raised concern and frustration about the lack of secondary schooling options for young people in their home community. This was most prevalent in Willowra and Nyirripi, where there is no post-primary program. In the larger communities, families also spoke of the importance of local secondary education. In all communities, this was frequently raised in relation to students who return from boarding school and do not wish to go back.

Four recommendations target boarding support specifically. Recommendation 14 proposes improved communication to boarding schools about the Boarding Support programs. Recommendation 15 proposes that WETT continues to offer all students boarding support, allowing students to access funds for any secondary program outside of the Warlpiri communities, but the following recommendation (16) proposes a new fund that would provide increased support for students to remain at five preferred partner boarding schools identified by WETT and the CLC CDU.



Colin Heenan-Puruntatameri, St Philip's Year 12 Graduation, 2015 (source St Philip's College)

Recommendation 17 proposes that WETT funds the creation of a Warlpiri Handbook for Boarding Schools. Many schools adopt a two-way philosophy that allows exchange of knowledge between the student’s community and the boarding school. This two-way philosophy is highlighted as good practice in the emerging research literature on boarding for remote students (see for example Benveniste et al., 2015a; Benveniste et al., 2015b; Mander et al., 2015; O’Bryan, 2015). Part of the two-way approach can be achieved with better information from the community. The project to develop a handbook for boarding schools could engage youth, elders and local educators. The product would then be useful for future years and assist partner schools to work better with community members. We suggest this project would sit well as an additional activity to be conducted by WYDAC in conjunction with PAW Media. Such a project could draw on students’ experiences of boarding school, providing the opportunity for reflection on the challenges students face leaving their communities to study. Funding sources such as the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Department of Education and Training could be approached.

Finally, Recommendation 26 proposes a co-investment package with the NT Government. This collaborative approach aligns with the strategic advocacy for WETT’s vision in Recommendation 3. WETT’s Secondary Student Support program is already funding an area of government priority, so cost-sharing for the expansion of this program should be discussed. It may mean WETT part-funding local transition support officers, or NT DoE committing to support middle-years programs at Willowra and Nyirripi with block learning in Alice Springs, with a concerted effort to successful completion of senior secondary outside of the community.

### Looking back

The Secondary Student Support program allocates \$200,000 for secondary students living outside of the four Warlpiri communities. Per Warlpiri student, \$2,500 is available for students attending secondary school outside of the Warlpiri communities, in the NT and interstate. The participating schools tend to change over time, as schools come in and out of favour with Warlpiri communities and as urban-based Warlpiri move around. Recent data show a high uptake of the fund for Warlpiri students who live with their families in Alice Springs.

However, overall the uptake has been low in terms of applications and subsequent request for funds, as indicated by number of schools submitting invoices. (see Table 7). The Review sought to investigate why this was the case.

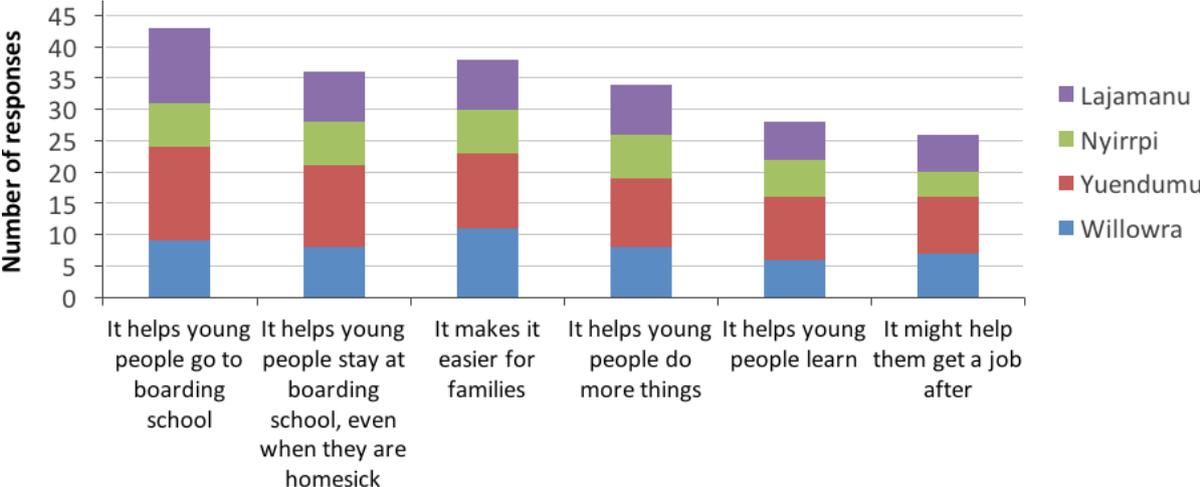
Table 6. Secondary student support: away-from-community fund applications, approvals and invoiced

Year	2013	2014	2015
Number of schools applied	6	11	13
Number of schools approved	6	11	13
Number of schools that invoiced	2	8	6

## Secondary support – Away from community consultation research and findings

Of the respondents, 34% said they never used the program, and 25% responded ‘I don’t know/I don’t want to say’ to the question, ‘How is this program going in your community?’ The percentages for these two responses were higher than for any other program (Figure 10).

Many respondents said that they had not heard of the program; 51 of the 89 survey respondents said that the fund is important, and across the four communities they shared similar views on why.



### Reasons why the program is important

Figure 10. Why is money for students at boarding school important for you? (51 respondents)

Respondents, particularly adults, felt that this is an important program, given the difficulties getting young Warlpiri to boarding schools and keeping them there. Fifteen of the 40 comments from the open-ended questions focused on the importance of making funds available to families to go with students to settle them in to boarding school or to visit them at times of crisis and difficulty. This was a strong message.

*Kids bail too much at boarding, and even at Yuendumu. We need to think of ways to keep kids at school. Sport academy and excursions are really good. Funding for boarding is really good. We should send kids in groups so they feel better. We should make sure they can keep in touch with families, not feel like they are missing out. Families should fly to those places and spend time with them, two weeks, stay there and help them. We have to look to the future; they have got to be strong. They have got to be strong with computers, new generation, new technology, computer work and all that. They can come back and learn more about English and Warlpiri culture, keep learning, never stops.*

(Willowra Community member, survey interview)

*This money helps Warlpiri kids have extras and families to come and visit and stay when kids are struggling. It should help families with accommodation and food when they are staying with kids away from home. It is better to head things off when kids are starting to struggle. Families should be able to get this money fast.*

(Lajamanu community member, survey interview)

While many families want their children to undertake schooling outside of the community, not all do and not all students are suited to this education mode. Ensuring that there is choice for students, in the smaller as well as the larger communities, is important. In Lajamanu and Yuendumu, secondary programs are available and many respondents stressed that staying in the community is better for many students, given the community experience of low success and completion in education away from the community. This supports data gathered relating to Youth Development programs and Learning Centres, which strongly featured improvements and expansions to existing programs to provide more learning, work experience and employment options for young people.

*They get really homesick at boarding school. They don't want to go too much. Its good when they can do high school here in Lajamanu. They really liked the Community Studies Drug and Alcohol and Family course at the Learning Centre.*

(Lajamanu community member, survey interview)

In Willowra and Nyirрпи, some respondents advocated for youth learning options, where there are no secondary learning opportunities.

*It's about fighting for secondary schools.*

(Nyirрпи community member, interview)

One respondent was particularly critical and posed important questions about Warlpiri families' investment in and commitment to secondary education outside of the community:

*I want more data, more feedback if kids are out of the NT. I want more information about their progress, wherever they are, and truthful, not just good stories. I want more input to the schools from Warlpiri communities. I want to know, is it improving our communities, our kids' education? Are they going to come back and have the skills to make improvements? This is my worry. Are they learning strongly from all this? Do these schools support and encourage kids who go across the borders? Will they achieve and help to achieve in the future? Do jobs get filled? Can we provide good people for the community? We need to help and support kids going away. They can get educated. We want them to be like us, follow in our footsteps. Will this or that boarding school deliver that? The community has to be supportive and committed, but we don't want to send our kids for nothing.*

(Kurra Director, interview)

While the program has not had significant uptake, there are students who have benefited from it. Sharing these good-news stories may encourage further awareness about the program. One young woman reflected on the impact the opportunity afforded her:

*I got money from WETT when I was at Kormilda to go to New Zealand. It was really good and the money helped me to pay for that trip. It's good to help Warlpiri kids do extra things when they are at boarding school. It makes them want to stay.*

(Willowra resident, interview)

With respect to the low uptake of this fund, the CLC CDU staff suggested that schools may find

the administration of the funds disconcerting. Currently schools can apply for funds anytime. The application processing time is short, as is the approval process. CLC CDU officers contact WETT members for approval if the application is submitted after the March WETT Advisory Committee meeting. Once approved, the school spends the sum and then submits an acquittal to the CLC to have the costs refunded, usually at the end of the year. Given this is a very busy time of the year, the arrangement may not suit schools very well. Numbers of applications, approvals and submitted invoices are shown in Table 7 above.

A greater problem was that many of the school principals and financial officers contacted claimed to be unaware of the fund. This is despite CLC CDU staff using regular and varied means to maintain communication, through emails and phone calls, creating and distributing leaflets and posters to boarding as well as community schools. In consultations with boarding schools, the Review team found that once they were aware of the fund, respondents in participating schools did not find the administration problematic. A failure in communication appears to be due to staff turnover in the schools.

The communication with Alice Springs schools appears to have been more effective, as several schools applied for funding for Warlpiri students. This could also be in part attributed to a recent and potentially temporary increase in Warlpiri students attending Alice Springs schools. The Review team did not interview schools or families in Alice Springs due to time constraints, but further investigation of population movements may be warranted for longer term planning.

Consultations with school principals and financial officers found that a number of boarding schools with Warlpiri students in the NT were largely unaware of the WETT fund. However, they all indicated a desire to access the fund for the benefit of their Warlpiri students, as these schools all face the issue of low retentions of remote students.



The Review team did not set out to explore alternative secondary education options with community members, and there was no explicit question about the proposed Warlpiri College, one alternative that has been canvassed for some years now by education consultant Andrew White. The college was raised by community members in only two interviews, with two senior men at Yuendumu. These interviewees felt that they had not had adequate opportunity to discuss the proposed college with the WETT Advisory Committee. Overall, the Review did not find evidence that the college is a key issue for Warlpiri community members.

Odessa Tippett, Kormilda College, 2008  
(source Kormilda College)

## Discussion and recommendations

Building and maintaining a profile and presence among boarding school staff requires on-going attention and this may not be a good use of CLC CDU officer's time. One solution could be to shift the administration of the fund to a broker such as the Centrecorp Foundation, which already has a support program and may have stronger profile. This would pass the onus for application to the student's parent. The downside of this arrangement is that it may limit applications to students who have parents with the capacity to apply. The Smith Family's Indigenous Youth Leadership Program and the Aurora Foundation program are further potential partners to help support Warlpiri students (see Appendix 2).

Another solution is to partner with particular schools that have a good track record of supporting remote students and to offer additional support to them so they can retain students longer. These 'preferred' boarding schools would have a regular intake of Warlpiri students and a demonstrated commitment to Warlpiri communities (Recommendation 16). This could make it easier to manage applications and process payments and would allow schools to deliver programs and projects tailored to Warlpiri students, aimed at student retention and completion in secondary education. The development of a handbook by Warlpiri young people for away-from-community education providers (Recommendation 17) dovetails with this goal. The Review team supports the view that parents should have a choice in where to send their children to school. As such, it recommends that any Warlpiri student should be able to access the fund (Recommendation 15).

The Review recognises the likelihood that more students will transition to boarding schools. Partly, this is due to the work of the NT DoE's Transition Support Unit, which has raised awareness of boarding options and worked with hundreds of families. The current NT Government has had a more muted response to promotion of boarding than the previous CLP government, probably because it is now aware of the extent to which boarding schools are under-resourced (KPMG, 2016) and the financial difficulties that some schools (notably Kormilda College) are facing. Other factors are working at the federal level: boarding schools will continue to be promoted as a vehicle for Closing the Gap (Turnbull, 2017). Most submissions to

the Inquiry into educational opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs, 2015, 2016) raised issues associated with boarding schools for remote students, and a reasonable expectation now would be a federal response that addressed these issues. The other factor that will contribute to growth in boarding participation is a



| David Wirrapunda, Worowa College Melbourne 2010 (source Worowa College)

trend towards increasing participation in education more generally, and the steady (albeit slow) improvement in educational outcomes for remote students (Guenther et al., 2016). Our analysis shows clear evidence of this in Warlpiri schools as shown in Figure 11, below. In 2008, there were on average 180 students participating in the four schools. In 2015 that number had grown to 260.

Notes: Warlpiri schools here are Lajamanu, Willowra, Yuendumu and Nyirripi schools; Participation is calculated as the percentage attendance rate x enrolment. Adapted from My School (ACARA, 2017)

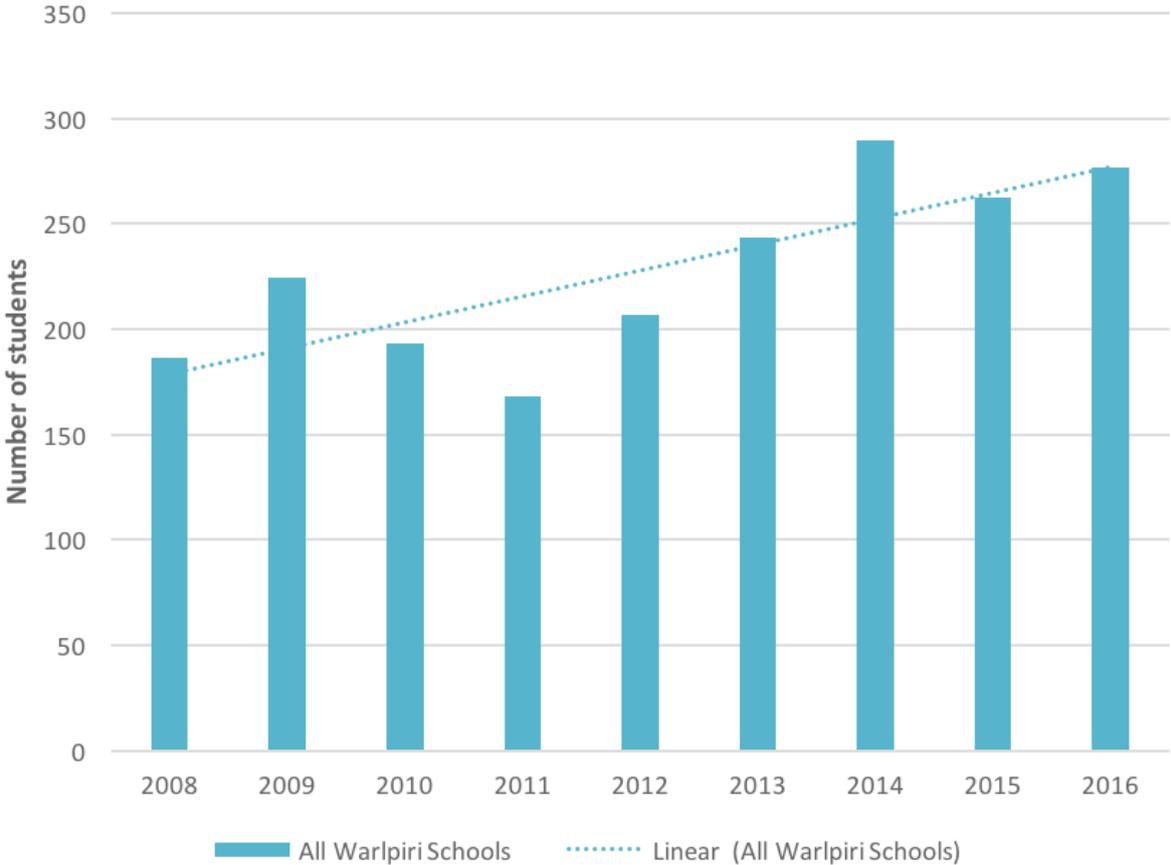


Figure 11. Warlpiri schools’ student participation by year

The Review is not suggesting this increase is attributable to WETT, though we do believe that the programs it supports in schools do support student engagement, attendance and retention. What we are suggesting in this chart is that against a backdrop of growing participation in schooling, it is likely that more young people will complete year 12 and will look for boarding school learning opportunities and, ultimately, university learning opportunities.

While this section has considered the secondary support for students leaving their community for secondary education, it also acknowledges the inadequacy of this as the sole option for education completion. While the Review recommends advocacy to the NT DoE for secondary program delivery in all communities (Recommendation 26), the team also held preliminary discussions with Youth Plus, an independent education provider offering flexible learning programs nationally. Youth Plus is prepared to explore a possible partnership (see Appendix 2).

## Warlpiri Secondary Student Support program – Bush schools

### Summary

The Warlpiri Secondary Student Support program – Bush schools provides funds to each bush school (Lajamanu, Yuendumu, Willowra, Nyirripi) to take a group of students on an interstate excursion each year for seven to ten days. The aims of the trip are various; exposure to and learning about other places in Australia, interaction with people outside of their community and associated learning about language and communication and a reward for attendance and participation in school in the community.

The program is a highly successful WETT initiative. Community members and schools discussed the significance of the opportunity and benefits the program represents to students. The out of community experience, English language exposure and opportunity to represent one's own community were also listed as virtues. In recent years, the remote schools have directed the focus of the trips increasingly to visiting boarding schools. This is a positive development. The Review has identified ways that this program could be expanded, by providing schools with additional funds for students, particularly senior secondary students, to travel interstate for specific learning purposes (Recommendation 19).



(above) St John's College Excursion Melbourne 2012 (source St John's College)  
(next page left) Kormilda NZ excursion 2010 (source Kormilda College),  
(right) Ngapa (water) excursion, Willowra, 2011 (source Willowra school)

## Looking back

According to the 2010 monitoring report, the School Excursions program ‘focuses on increasing the resilience of young people so they can manage in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures’ and provides incentives to students to attend and remain at school (Kelly, 2011, p. 32). Appraisals of the excursions in the monitoring reports are overwhelmingly from school staff and are generally very positive, though relatively short and descriptive only.

The 2012 report notes that school staff and, in some cases, students report back about their experiences; however, there is less information about the long-term benefits and outcomes of the activities (p. 27). There is no evidence collated on the impact of attendance, either in the lead up to or following school excursions. WETT Advisory Committee members have been concerned that participation on excursions should not be too strongly tied to attendance, seeing exclusion as an unhelpful lever to improve engagement. The Independent Evaluation of the Central Land Council’s Community Development Program (Roche & Ensor, 2014) reviewed the School Excursion programs of Lajamanu and Willowra only. In the discussion of the relationship between participation on excursions, consultations in Willowra, the report notes:

*Staff at the school were more sceptical of the impact of the visits on attendance, suggesting that other things such as sorry business, football tournaments and conflicts were the drivers of the ups and downs experienced. They also believed there should be a stronger educational component to the visits (p. 49).*

Some of the earlier excursions included few specifically educational activities, but this has changed in recent years.

Some staff have attributed the take-up of schooling outside of the community in part to the program, and generally stressed the importance of students being able to see opportunities outside of the community (Kelly, 2015, p. 14). There is evidence of increased uptake of secondary schooling away from the home communities. However there is a lack of data on student retention and so the overall success of the program in providing increased opportunities for secondary learning remains unsubstantiated.

In previous monitoring material, there is limited information about the value parents and community members place on these learning experiences. Roche and Ensor report that parents and students in Willowra were ‘universally positive about the interstate school visits’ and that ‘parents emphasised both the learning potential as well as the incentives they created for improved school attendance’ (p. 48). The report provides quotes from just two Lajamanu family members, and both responses show that they valued the new learning and curiosity that their children brought back to Lajamanu.



## Secondary support – School Excursions consultation research and findings

Community responses to this program indicated strong support and satisfaction, with the opportunity for students to experience and learn about cities and locations outside of the NT as a key benefit.

*Kids can learn more about Australia. Kardiya will learn about Warlpiri and kids can share their culture. They can do things for the first time, like swim in the sea.*

(Lajamanu resident, survey interview)

*It's important for Yapa students to interact with Kardiya people and other nationalities, learn about their culture, behaviour, religion and more.*

(Willowra resident, survey interview)

*When kids go away for interstate excursions, like the trip to Melbourne two months back, they learn about a lot of different things. First time on a plane, big smoke; it's something beyond a dream. I support that strongly. This is how they get to see the big picture, outside Yuendumu, outside our country. We need to keep that going.*

(Yuendumu young educator, survey interview)

The question of linking school attendance to participation on the trip has been vexed at times; schools are under pressure from the NT DoE to use excursions as a lever, but the WETT Advisory Committee is concerned about exclusion of students who would benefit from this type of learning experience. Few respondents discussed attendance. However, at Yuendumu, where there is an explicit system of rewards, particularly within the young men's program, this was raised.

*They sometimes come home with forms and they get messages to attend school to meet the goal. They get the achievement awards [for attendance] from school and then they can go on the trip. They go places and see things we don't have here. Sometimes they bring ideas back, like discos and ideas about big playgrounds. When they went on the Albury trip, that was Yapa, Kardiya teachers and elders working together.*

(Yuendumu resident, survey interview)

On the 2016 Albury trip mentioned, Yuendumu School students performed with school staff and community members for the host school and community of Albury. The trip involved pre-excursion learning to provide the cultural exchange event.

*Our plan was to have yawulyu (women's ceremony) and purlapa (men's ceremony). purlapa has really not happened much in the school in recent years. Planning involved taking boys and young men out on weekends with old men (Tommy Watson and Warren Williams, mostly) to teach boys songs and dancing. Two weekends at Mission Creek. This was a great learning opportunity and achievement in itself. In the end the men did not go on the trip; however, they recorded their singing and the boys were able to perform in Albury to the recording. The women and girls performed all live. Hugely successful event for Albury community and host school!*

(Yuendumu School principal, interview)

The potential for a two-way exchange, the importance of opening horizons, developing confidence and overcoming fear and shyness in new situations came through the comments.

*We met kids at Geelong. They like meeting Yapa kids from Nyirrpi. It was a good thing.*

(Educator from Nyirrpi, interview)

*It's good to experience city life; it's different from the bush. They might feel frightened and lonely, but it's good to feel like that and find out that they are ok. It's a good experience for going to boarding school.*

(Yuendumu resident, survey interview)

*Kids really calm down after a day or two. They are free of community pressure, their blood pressure really drops, they chill out. There is space for relationships to develop between teachers and students, they have time to talk and share experiences. This translates back in the classroom.*

*The kids are more reliant on teachers and they are looking to them for support; they are compliant and never, never mess up. They get out and they talk to people. They are treated differently to how they are treated in Katherine, Darwin, Alice Springs. They are so proud to represent their community, always want to wear school t-shirts and present themselves proudly.*

(Lajamanu senior teacher)



| Nyirrpi School Excursion (source Nyirrpi School)

The importance of the trips to familiarise students with boarding schools and prime them for attending secondary programs interstate was a common theme.

*It's a once in a lifetime trip. We can encourage kids to come to school because the excursion is a reward. They experience the city life, and they learn more about Kardiya ways because that's how the Kardiya live on their country. They can find out more about boarding.*

(Lajamanu resident, survey interview)

*It's good when they go to Djarragun and Mt St Bernard to see the boarding schools. They visit the other families staying there.*

(Nyirрпи resident, survey interview)

However, the message also came through clearly that having the choice to learn in one's own community or go away to boarding school, or indeed both, is important.

*We want really strong secondary learning. We want secondary in Yuendumu and some kids can go to boarding. We want them all to get strong secondary in the next 10 years, five years. They should go to university; for that they need strong family, strong thinking.*

(Yuendumu resident, survey interview)

*My granddaughter went to Cairns. They visited Djarragun and Mt St Bernard and Sugar World and Green Island. They had a really good time. She doesn't want to go away to boarding school yet. We want kids to go to boarding, but not if they are not ready. They won't stay there.*

(Willowra resident, interview)

Overall, there is significant uniformity in the responses from the four communities about the purposes for the school excursions (see Figure 12).

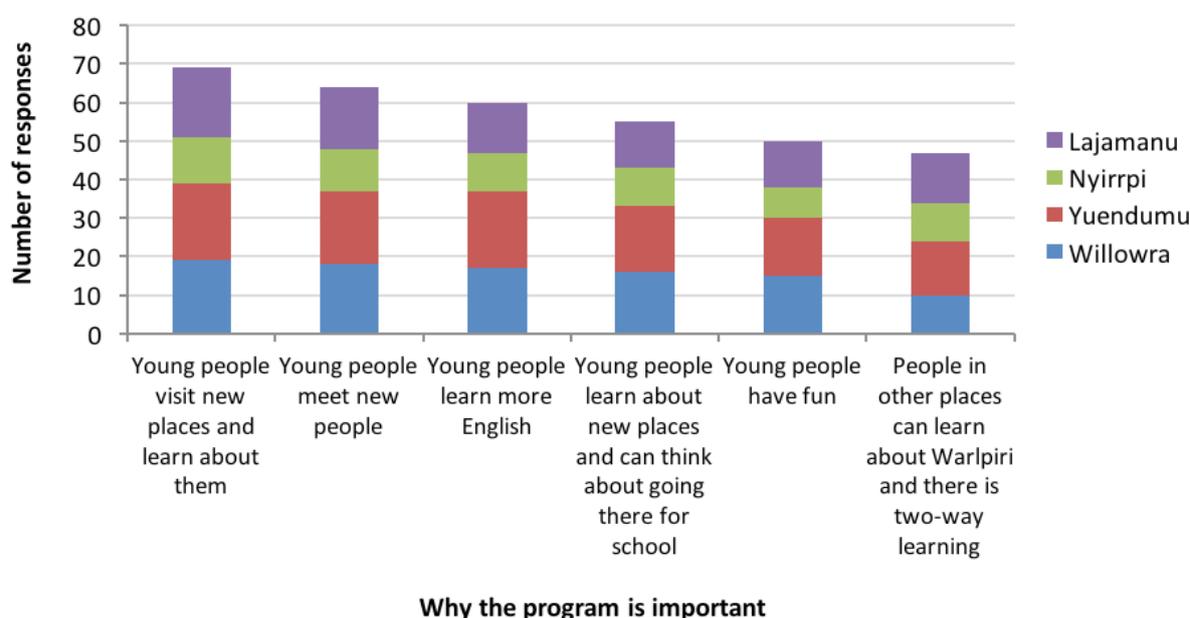


Figure 12. Why is the School Excursion program important for you? (71 respondents)

## Discussion and recommendations

Overall, this program is well regarded. It aims to serve several purposes, such as exposure to other places and practices, engaging with non-Warlpiri people and culture and sharing Warlpiri culture with others. These aims appear to be met. The effectiveness of the program as part of the transition to and retention at boarding school has not been evaluated, though anecdotally there appear to be some benefits. Clearly, this goal requires further supports, and these are laid out under Secondary Support – Away from Community.

The schools are motivated towards the program in different ways because of the different availability of secondary programs. For instance, at Nyirripi and Willowra, which rarely offer a post-primary program, upper primary-aged students go on the excursions (years 5 and 6). As the only option for secondary education is outside of the community, these school excursions are focused on visiting boarding schools. At Yuendumu and Lajamanu, where secondary programs are available, secondary-aged students take part, with less emphasis in the excursions on visiting interstate boarding schools. This should be taken into account in developing monitoring and evaluation frameworks. The Review addresses this in Recommendation 19, by proposing a new program to foster learning opportunities for secondary-aged students outside of the community. The fund would be made available initially to the two larger schools, which have secondary programs. It would allow students, probably in small groups, to pursue learning programs, such as sporting opportunities, internships, exchanges and English language programs. A set of potential partners and programs is included in Appendix 2. This recommendation addresses a potential equity issue, by providing greater funding and opportunity to students learning in their community, commensurate with the funding and opportunity provided to students attending boarding programs.

The amount of funding available was raised in interviews with school staff. One school claimed that the fund was not great enough, raising concern that the costs for the non-Warlpiri teachers could not be covered by the WETT fund. However, another principal told the review, ‘Unless we buy each child a gold-plated watch, there is no way we could use all of the funds. And so this year, the school has organised two trips with the same money’. This principal also explained that these trips were previously organised by education booking agencies, which added significant cost and the program tended to include a good deal of entertainment rather than targeted

learning. Now that schools organise them, they can be tailored to the learning needs and interests of the school program and students and the involvement of Yapa staff, even though local planning and organisation is time-consuming. As this program is working well, the Review makes no recommendation about its administration or level of funding.



Lajamanu School excursion, Melbourne 2007 (source Lajamanu school)

# Youth Development program

## Summary

The Youth Development program operated by WYDAC is well known and highly valued in the four communities. WYDAC has a coherent and comprehensive model for its youth development and client services (see Figure 13). Through its Youth Development program it provides diversionary activities for school aged children, and its Youth Development program, additional activities for 16 - 22 year olds through the Jaru program, leading to the Life Pathways program (see image below). It appears to implement this most effectively in Yuendumu; its centralisation there poses challenges to equitable service delivery in the other communities.



Figure 13. WYDAC Programs and services (Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation, 2016)

In Yuendumu and Willowra, where WYDAC was rated as operating well, respondents proposed ways to expand these services, with night school, family support and more Jaru (youth leaders engaged in roles of responsibility) and employment opportunities. In Lajamanu and Nyirripi, where concerns were raised about a lack of youth services and continuity of services, comments focused on this shortfall. Several recommendations (17, 22, 25, potentially 9 and 23) will involve projects through WYDAC. Evaluation processes and funding agreements should be used to ensure that WYDAC involves all communities in these projects and that identified outcomes are met. Liaison with peers in the sector locally, such as Central Australian Youth Link Up Service (CAYLUS) and Youth Services at Central Desert and McDonnell Community Councils, may be helpful in informing evaluation frameworks and identified outcomes.

In all four communities, respondents identified youth leadership, training and development as a priority issue. Concern was raised about opportunities and good life choices for young people and young parents. In Willowra and Nyirripi, where there is no secondary program available locally, there was concern about a lack of learning opportunities for young people.



Willowra Youth Program (source WYDAC)

## Looking back

The Warlpiri Youth Development program has been allocated the greatest proportion of WETT funds to date, amounting to \$4,913,024 since 2006. These funds have been allocated to Mt Theo and, with its expansion, to WYDAC (Mt Theo - Yuendumu Substance Misuse Aboriginal Corporation, 2007; Warlpiri Youth Aboriginal Development Corporation Mt Theo Program, 2008). In the initial funding agreement (2008) between the Youth and Media program, Kurra Aboriginal Corporation (as trustee of WETT) and the Mt Theo - Yuendumu Substance Misuse Aboriginal Corporation, the vision, or stated WETT policy was:

*To support Warlpiri youth to develop their sense of self, family and culture through diversionary programs with a special focus on media that promote education and training outcomes. (Central Land Council, 2008, p. 15)*

The strategy it outlined to meet this policy was clearly articulated to include diversionary programs such as sport and recreation, with a strong media focus; broader community engagement; introduction of a training plan relevant to education, training and employment outcomes; and the production of media products by suitable trainees, managed by WYDAC. Over time, WYDAC has come to organise its programs over three levels: the youth diversionary program; a Youth Development program, with the Jaru Pirrjirdi trainees (with media, mentoring/learning and training elements); and the Jaru Pirrjirdi - Life pathways program (Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation, 2016). The early partnership between the Mt Theo Program (which would become WYDAC), PAW Media, CAYLUS and the community provided a strong foundation to develop these programs and meet the originally stated goals.

This foundation and strategic approach appear to have endured, with WYDAC having consolidated and expanded programs and funding sources (Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation, 2015, p. 35), improving its prospects for sustainability. The partnership between WYDAC and WETT provides a good example of seed funding for productive outcomes. WYDAC has achieved a great deal in terms of social and material infrastructure, governance structures and participation and outcomes for Warlpiri youth. This is evidenced in its own longstanding reporting system, CDU monitoring reports, and the recent evaluation of the program by Gillian Shaw (Shaw, 2015).

However, the WYDAC program also highlights the different challenges and different outcomes for individual communities. The program began in Yuendumu, and the administrative centre is located there (Stojanovski, 2010). Each of the programs is more established at Yuendumu than at the other communities and enjoys greater success and effectiveness. This was not the original intention. The first funding agreement (Central Land Council, 2008, p. 15) stipulated that:

*The Program will commence in the two communities of greatest need - Nyirrpi and Lajamanu, with some activity in Willowra and Yuendumu. As further funding is secured, all communities will be equally serviced.*

Programs for Lajamanu, Willowra and Nyirrpi are provided through outreach services and have local subcommittees aligned to the WYDAC board. These programs are still in establishment phases. They do not attract and retain the same numbers, and staff in these communities report that their work is hard more than staff at Yuendumu do (Shaw, 2015, p. 13).

The location of the administration at Yuendumu also appears to promote the power of networking within Yuendumu and lend a critical mass that allows for opportunities to be identified, fostered and taken up. The Parent and Community Engagement project (PACE) in 2014–2015 is a case in point (Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation, 2015, p. 12–13). In taking this grant, WYDAC was able to craft a program to fulfil its obligations and meet a number of local goals, including ways to promote wellbeing and safety, and young women’s issues set in the newly founded Jaru Learning Centre, school council engagement and development and a multimedia project. This flexible and local responsiveness allows WYDAC programs to spread across schools, youth learning and wellbeing and media. As the 2014 monitoring report says, ‘[S]ignificantly, [WYDAC in Yuendumu] is becoming part of a much wider community service, focused around young people and their families’ (Kelly, 2015, p. 12). If WYDAC services in the other three communities can identify and act on strategic opportunities, they could draw in additional resources and allow more strategic use of existing resources. Collaborations across organisations, including WETT-funded programs may also be fruitful.



There are clear synergies between the Youth Development program and its implementation by WYDAC, secondary learning opportunities and the Learning Centres. While it may be tempting to propose new and additional roles for this successful regional program, the Shaw evaluation (Shaw, 2015) warned against an overexpansion of WYDAC, and the Review team has kept this in mind.

WYDAC’s status and success as a regional program appears to have been supported by its dedication to local employment and community engagement through governance structures such as its active board and local subcommittees, though these may be stronger in some locations than others. Nevertheless, this has fostered a network of youth-focused professional and community-engaged peers, similar to the network of educators that emerged through the Warlpiri Bilingual Education program, which has driven WETT.

| Worowa College ‘Stylin’ Up’ Fashion Parade, Melbourne (source Worowa College)

## Youth Development program consultation research and findings

Over 70% of survey respondents rated the Youth Development program in their communities as good or very good, except Lajamanu respondents, who rated it at slightly less than this. Yuendumu respondents rated the program highest, where the range of activities and services provided is extensive, known and valued.

*Young people already look after younger ones, but at WYDAC they learn more responsibilities and organising activities, canteen. It's good for elders to go out and teach kids on country. They need support from counselling, it's really ngurrju. Media is good for them; they are learning more about computers.*

(Yuendumu resident, survey interview)

At Willowra, similar activities were mentioned, and the role of WYDAC in building pride and independence in young people is repeated in the last quote.

*It's good when they work with PAW Media and make videos. Weekend activities are good.*

*It's good that they take kids out with old people for hunting. They sometimes need help with legal things, especially young adults, young men.*

*WYDAC is working well. It helps young people; they get casual work there. My granddaughter really likes working there. She gets paid in a voucher and is very proud to buy her own food at the store. WYDAC take kids out swimming, out bush when there is water, to Yuendumu sometimes too. But there are not so many old people going on the trips, sometimes just young people. They need to make sure they do culture activities, hunting and learning with old people.*

(Three Willowra residents, survey interview and interview data)



| Willowra Bush Camp 2011 (source Willowra School)

While respondents at Nyirrpi and Lajamanu – and, to a lesser extent at Yuendumu and Willowra – listed shortfalls of the local WYDAC program, they were also very constructive about the potential for projects and programs in their communities and the links to other agencies in providing activities and learning for young people. The Review team did not have the opportunity to speak to board members in each community and gauge their involvement; however, these groups are crucial to feeding in ideas and building support and capacity for local follow-up.

*WYDAC is not really strong. Not a lot of activities. They are busy in Yuendumu and so we don't have much program. It's good having the counselling program. Our young people need more work with WYDAC. They like working there. WYDAC should do three-day camps with young people. No ganja smoking. But right now they really only look after young people who are in trouble with the police. But we have a lot of 13-16 year olds who are not at boarding. They don't want to go or they don't stay for very long. Some are going and staying.*

(Nyirrpi resident, interview data)

*This program is not really strong; there is not enough program. Too much of the time kids are running wild doing nothing much. They should widen it out to have more computer, reading, books for kids, different activities with different Yapa staff and community members. They need to do better to get kids involved, busy and safe. It's not very strong; they only take them out on Saturdays. That is the main thing and that is good. They could work with CLC and go on camping trips in the holidays overnight with families.*

*They should keep looking for different projects, like the hip hop dancer from New York. That was really, really good. Katherine West [Health Board] invited AFL to Lajamanu, just one day but it was so positive. It's good to take kids out swimming. We used to have swimming and fishing comp. The big kids should go on trips to Yuendumu, go to festivals and community events. It would be good to have a holiday program of events, school holidays, maybe with young people coming as volunteers working with Jaru here. We need more Jaru, more training and employment for them.*

*We have young people not going to school and lots of kids in trouble. We need services for them to help them. We need counselling. They need to be encouraged to go to school, to learning programs. We should have night school, reading nights, for girls and boys separately. It's good to do cooking with young people, movie nights, legal education nights and projects, health education nights. We have talked to Katherine Health Board about this. We have someone coming from Katherine. But we want to see that happening all of the time, because we have a lot of health issues.*

(Three Lajamanu residents, survey interview)

Strategically partnering with other agencies is an evident strength of WYDAC. It allows WYDAC to draw in activities and projects at little cost, to ensure that sound principles are used and adds value to visiting drive-in/drive-out providers.

*We are great at making spaces, partnering. Say if it's Department of Health that wants to run men's health workshops: we are there on the ground. If they come out here cold and try to run something, nothing happens. But they partner with us and we can get 30 men in a room no problems. We set a BBQ, we promote it in advance, we set up the appropriate forum and they provide the content.*

(WYDAC Manager, Yuendumu, interview) Asked how well this works outside of Yuendumu, the WYDAC manager responded:

*I think quite well. Tomorrow in Willowra there is a hygiene party with Department of Health. Last week we had a nutrition day in Nyirrpi. It's often driven by health and, I would say, in terms of Nyirrpi and Willowra, they get fewer visitors. In Yuendumu and Lajamanu it's sometimes about pushing back; they get overrun by visitors. It's about picking up spots in Yuendumu and Lajamanu, and in Willowra and Nyirrpi going for everything.*

(WYDAC Manager, Yuendumu, interview)

Since the appointment of the current school principal, Yuendumu has been able to develop and showcase how collaboration between the school, WYDAC and the Learning Centre can provide learning for secondary school-aged students. The Cyber Safety project and Certificate I Foundation Skills – Small Enterprise projects are examples of this. The capacity and approach of staff at Yuendumu School, which pursues a 'no barriers' ethos to secondary learning access, have facilitated this significantly, particularly the educators in the two senior years training positions.

Some respondents in Yuendumu and other communities – particularly Willowra, which does not have a secondary program – suggested that WYDAC take a greater role in development and delivery of secondary programs.

*WYDAC is ok. They need to do more. We should get WYDAC, Learning Centre and school to work together so that there are good programs for teenagers. The young teenagers are our biggest concern. They are really in big danger, from grog, ganja; we even had one petrol sniffer. We sent him to Mt Theo. But we are worried about young people. They do what they want. They are getting married and having children. We need good programs for them. We want them to be strong adults and strong parents. When they are parents, we want good programs to help them, like A [WYDAC Yapa staff member, Yuendumu] was talking.*

*There should also be learning programs for young people who don't want to go to boarding or who come back. This could be worked on by the Learning Centre, WYDAC and RJCP together. We can't wait for education department for this.*

(Two Willowra residents, interview data)

There is merit in exploring these ideas further; however, the Review does not find that WYDAC should provide secondary learning programs where the NT DoE is not providing them. While WYDAC, along with Learning Centres, could play constructive roles in this area, a good deal of negotiation and planning would be required. Several Review recommendations are relevant and discussed below.

Once again, though WYDAC is not responsible for supporting secondary education, WYDAC staff and some community respondents discussed WYDAC’s role in supporting families to access information and complete administration associated with boarding school applications. WYDAC has received support from the NT Government in the past for these transition support activities. It has experience and expertise.

Overall, the quantitative data from the survey found considerable uniformity across the four communities regarding the goals of the Youth Development program in the four communities, highlighting their alignment with the WETT Advisory Committee’s vision for this program, as shown in Figure 14 below.

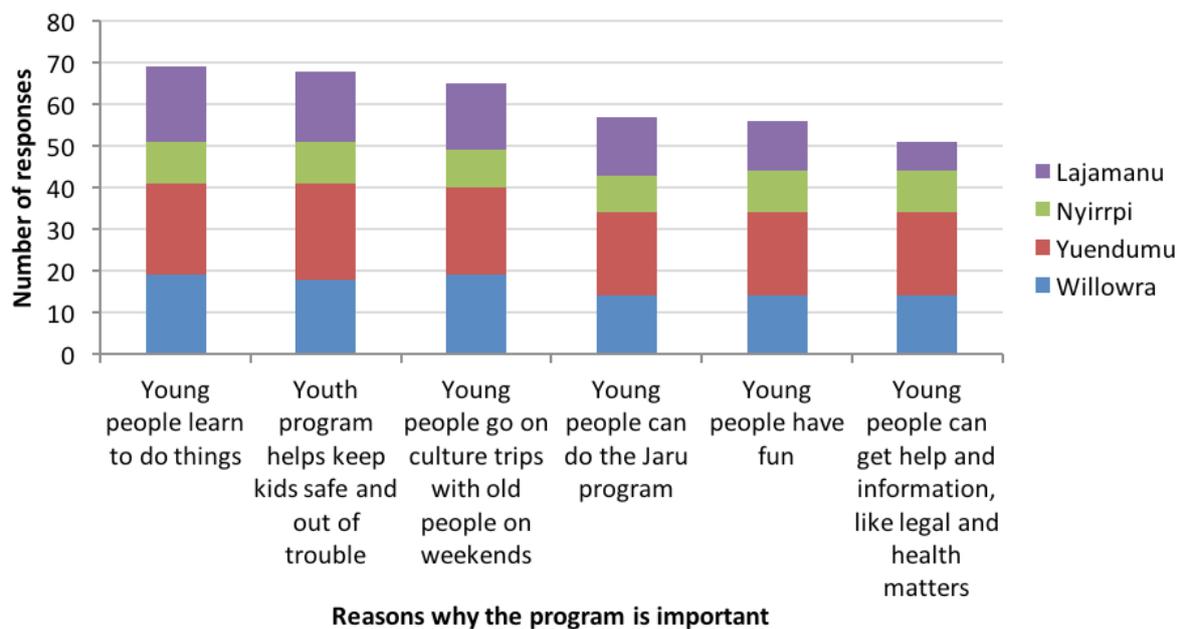


Figure 14. Why are youth programs important for you? (72 responses)

## Discussion and recommendations

Recommendation 20 relates directly to the Youth Development program. It does not recommend any significant change to the existing project. WYDAC is frank about the challenges of delivering services evenly across the four communities, and the WETT Advisory Committee should work with WYDAC to address shortfall in service delivery to Lajamanu, Willowra and Nyirripi and continue to monitor this. A participatory evaluation framework will assist this process.

Two of the key themes that emerged from community consultations are important to raise with respect to the Youth Development program employment and family wellbeing and support. WYDAC reports that there are casual Yapa staff, in the programs but going into the next decade, it is important that more young Warlpiri are trained and employed, particularly in the three less serviced communities. This is part of the broader employment strategy proposed in Recommendation 4. Target-setting and design of a clear and appropriately resourced strategy over the short, medium and long term may be the most effective way to see improvement here. Within the proposed Families and Children program, the team has recommended that WETT commit funding to a family support program in each community. As WYDAC has been involved in such programs in the past and is very capable with program design and implementation, the Review recommends approaching WYDAC as the preferred partner in this.

There is a natural evolution at present, with WYDAC collaborating strongly at Yuendumu with the school and also piloting operating the Learning Centre. In the medium term, WYDAC may identify further prospects and opportunities, and communication channels between WYDAC and WETT are likely to stay open to further explore this potential. Recommendation 20 encourages this.

The Review stresses that the provision of secondary programs is the responsibility of the NT DoE and warns against encouraging a retreat from this position. As part of Recommendation 3, to develop strategic partnerships and open dialogue, the Review recommends that WETT raise this issue with NT DoE and explore the implementation of the Employment Pathways Curriculum Framework as an option for secondary learning, particularly at Willowra and Nyirripi (Recommendation 26). Yuendumu School has adopted this Framework in 2017 and is being given additional funding by the NT DoE to support a range of informal/formal training opportunities under delivery of the Framework. WYDAC and the Learning Centres will collaborate with Yuendumu in this delivery. Collaboration between NT DoE with WYDAC and the Learning Centres in the other communities on a secondary program would require extensive planning, commitment from the schools and cost-sharing. While Yuendumu has demonstrated how such a partnership can work, the conditions in the other communities mean that this is not simply replicable or transferable. Closer links between the schools, through for instance a Warlpiri Group School model, would enhance this.

The Review notes that WYDAC is currently undertaking a pilot project to operate the Yuendumu Learning Centre in 2017. Decisions about the future of the Learning Centres will be guided by the appraisal of this pilot and of the new model under trial by Batchelor Institute at the other three Learning Centres.

WYDAC has operated a night school in the past, providing an opportunity for general literacy and numeracy teaching and learning. Reinstatement of this deserves attention, given it was raised in community consultations as a popular program. A second chance for general education, offered within an adult education framework is required. The Learning Centres are an obvious site for night school. However, given decisions are yet to be made about the future management of the Learning Centres, it is not possible to say whether night school programs would best be operated by WYDAC (as the Youth service provider and/or possibly as the managing organisation of the Learning Centres) or another provider (Batchelor Institute, an unknown provider, NT DoE – a collaboration of a range of providers).

WYDAC has shown commitment and competence in managing projects related to transitions to schooling outside of the community. Recommendations 17 and 23 both relate to this area. The Review recommends that WYDAC, in collaboration potentially with PAW Media, be the preferred partner for the development of a Warlpiri Handbook for Boarding Schools. This project could include a research element by young people to explore ideas and challenges young people see in the transition to learning outside of the community. The project should include employment of local staff and consultants and be carried out in all four communities.

Finally, a marketing consideration is worth highlighting, to make the WETT-WYDAC partnership more visible. WETT has consistently provided at least half of WYDAC’s funding and although this is stated in texts (e.g. CEO’s reports in the opening pages of the Annual Reports), WETT is not well represented visually and its financial contribution tends to be buried. WETT and Kurra are not named in the finance information or included on the list of organisations that provide funds to WYDAC in the Annual Reports. The WETT Advisory Committee should consider ensuring more prominent WETT branding on WYDAC outputs. This relates to Recommendation 28, to improve WETT’s communication strategy.



| Jaru Learning Centre Mural Workshop, Yuendumu, 2014 (source WYDAC)

## Warlpiri Community Learning Centres

### Summary

The establishment of the four Learning Centres has been a major achievement. They play a crucial role for the four communities not only for adult learning, but also for a wide range of required civic literacies and services. Batchelor Institute has partnered with WETT throughout this program, and overall the working relationship has been positive. However, there have been challenges. Getting the Learning Centre model right to meet the varied expectations and needs of the community, the WETT funding agreements and Batchelor Institute's own business model has been particularly challenging. Batchelor has also struggled to recruit and maintain suitable non-local staff, to provide sufficient hours for local staff and to provide training and support to upskill local staff to operate the centres in the absence of non-local staff. Despite these challenges and the frequent interruptions to services, respondents in all communities rated this program as going well in their community.

The key finding from the Review is that the reliance on formal training as the vehicle for co-investment from Batchelor Institute does not serve the Learning Centres well. It prioritises enrolling Learning Centre users in Batchelor training programs. This does not reflect the usage patterns and learning demands of the community, who have a range of expectations for the centre. It places pressure on the Co-ordinators, who must both meet enrolment targets and community demands for civic literacy activities, non-formal learning, as well as accredited training. It also limits the scope of training available to training delivered by Batchelor Institute. Recommendation 22 is pivotal in redesigning the Learning Centre model. It proposes that a fifth position, in addition to the four Learning Centre Coordinators, which will be responsible for sourcing and coordinating funding and learning/training programs, which will relieve the cost pressure that the current Batchelor Institute model applies.



| WETT Advisory Committee members (from left) Maisie Kitson, Carol Kitson, Julie Kitson (proxy), Annette Patrick (source CLC)

## Looking back

This program has developed significantly since the inception of WETT. Outcomes include three purpose-built centres (Lajamanu, Willowra and Yuendumu) and significant uptake of learning, training and access to resources in all four communities. At Nyirripi, a purpose-built centre predates the WETT program and belongs to Batchelor Institute. WETT entered into a funding agreement with Batchelor to support its operations at the Nyirripi Learning Centre in 2010, and this has continued to the present. The Lajamanu Learning Centre began operation in 2009 with a partnership between WETT and Central Desert Shire. Batchelor Institute began operating the centre under a new partnership with WETT and Kurra in 2012. From 2012 and 2014 the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) funded a co-ordinator position, employed through Batchelor Institute to support the two Warlpiri Learning Centres and the Batchelor Learning Centre at Alparra. In 2013 a purpose-built centre at Willowra, co-funded by WETT and the federal government was opened and a similar funding agreement to operate this third Warlpiri Learning Centre was made with Batchelor Institute. In 2014, WYDAC accessed funding for construction of the Jaru Learning Centre in Yuendumu. WETT entered into a funding agreement with Batchelor to operate the centre, with a Memorandum of Understanding between Batchelor Institute, CLC and WYDAC.

While the various centres have had different establishment histories, the current funding agreements for the four sites are relatively uniform, with WETT paying Batchelor Institute \$220,000 per year per site for the operation of the Learning Centre. This includes a management fee. Batchelor Institute contributes \$87,750 per year per site. This covers half of the Co-ordinator's salary plus some additional items. Batchelor employs a program co-ordinator to manage the program across the four sites.

According to the 2012–2016 funding agreements between Batchelor Institute, WETT and Kurra, the goal of the Learning Centres is:

*To provide the community with a space to actively engage in formal and informal learning; access computers, the internet and library resources; a space to teach and celebrate Warlpiri language and culture and store cultural materials.*

The purpose is:

*To maximise the number of people in the community who are strong in their own Warlpiri identity and culture, engaged in learning and also confident, motivated and skilled to pursue pathways to further learning, employment and meaningful life opportunities.*

The program is based on a theory of change that states:

*Access to the Community Learning Centre will increase the learning and life opportunities and wellbeing of the community.*

A detailed project schedule lists objectives, outputs, indicators and reporting requirements for the Learning Centres. Outputs are:

- the active involvement of a community advisory group
- delivery of accredited training
- a program of informal education activities and support
- a program of cultural and community activities
- computer and internet access for education, training and cultural needs
- case management of individual life pathways
- training and/or mentoring of the trainee local coordinator.

These statements and outputs make up a clear and detailed WETT policy for Warlpiri community Learning Centres.

Monitoring and partner reports over time reveal a stop-start pattern with cycles of activity and inactivity at three of the longer established Learning Centres, as recruitment and retention of suitable non-local staff has been a significant problem. This FaHCSIA funded a regional co-ordination position between 2012 and 2014, but it appears that the opportunity to establish and consolidate the program was missed in this time, with little planning for the withdrawal of these funds. This appears to have created tensions. While WETT articulates a range of outcomes in its funding agreements and Batchelor Institute has focused strongly on accredited training.

This leads to the second issue, as coordinators also appear to have struggled to find a consistent way to manage this tension. Accredited training is clearly part of the WETT policy for the Learning Centres. Indeed, according to one Kurra Director (meeting 11 June, 2015):

*What we really need is to get formal training happening in the Learning Centre. Not enough has been happening there. [...] is just sitting there on the headphones.*

However, not all learners are ready for, interested in or will benefit from accredited training. In many remote communities, achieving certificates is less important than gaining skills and knowledge (for example foundational literacy and numeracy skills) that have direct benefit to people's livelihoods, whether that be related to paid work or some kind of community service (Guenther et. al, 2017). The emphasis on accredited training appears to have tipped the balance from attention to important foundational tasks, such as developing local staff capacity to support learning, community buy-in and governance through local reference groups, regional connections between the Learning Centres and partnerships across the community to attention to accredited training delivered by Batchelor Institute. It also tends to hamper exploration and development of structured non-formal learning programs, resulting in participation at the Learning Centres being limited to independent computer use, potentially largely for entertainment purposes. All of this can leave little space for exploring and developing language and culture activities.

At times, Learning Centre programs have been able to manage this balance. The partner reports in March–August 2015 from Wirliyajarrayi Learning Centre (Willowra) and Jirtirparnta Learning Centre (Nyirrpi), for instance, describe vibrant and varied programs, as well as challenges and constructive solutions. At Willowra, the coordinator's video editing skills were

shared and integrated into training and assessment, and programs designed to attract men to the centre have proven successful. The centre emphasises developing local staff. At the end of 2015, the Learning Centre Coordinator and WETT Advisory Committee were reviewing how the centre might meet the learning needs of youth returned from Yirara College. The importance of balancing informal, formal training and seeking and collaboratively meeting community aspirations and processes are clear in the reflection of the reporting period by the Centre coordinator. At Nyirripi in this period, there was active promotion and involvement of the reference group and a range of structured informal learning activities, including monthly Money Management workshops delivered by Waltja. A sewing project provided a vehicle for a Foundation Skills programs with Certificates I and II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways. The project was delivered by the coordinator, in collaboration with Willow Tree, and involved a microenterprise (sale of products produced at a market day). Visiting lecturers provided training in Early Childhood Education and Care and Visual Arts. Recruitment and development of local staff was targeted, though not yet solid. The coordinator resigned and left in 2016, and the centre was closed once again.

Concern regarding the situation and the partnership with Batchelor Institute has built over the last few years. With the funding agreement ending in December 2016, the WETT Advisory Committee decided in September to pilot two models. One is designed and delivered by Batchelor Institute and will operate in 2017 in Willowra, Lajamanu and Nyirripi. The other, at Yuendumu will be delivered by WYDAC. At the September WETT Advisory Committee meeting, Batchelor presented four alternative models to WETT. None were clearly designed or communicated as optimal for meeting the concerns WETT has raised over time. The Advisory Committee did not select a model, but requested Batchelor Institute to design a model that would meet WETT's stated priorities and would be piloted in 2017 in the remaining three centres. The Advisory Committee is due to appraise the Batchelor model in the three centres and WYDAC's operation at Yuendumu late 2017 and make decisions about the future arrangements.



| Willowra Learning Centre Staff, 2015 (Source CLC)

## Learning Centre consultation research and findings

The WETT funding agreements detail a long and varied list of outcomes for the Learning Centres. This broad set was included in the survey to gauge community understandings and expectations of the role of the Learning Centres.

Once again, there is considerable consensus between the communities in terms of factors respondents listed as important (Figure 14). The communities see Learning Centres as places for people to access computers and become more independent in their use of them. Computers are used for social and entertainment purposes; however, they also play an important role in the second most frequently listed reason for the Learning Centre: assistance with what we have termed 'civic literacies'. These are tasks that require literacy – print, digital and representational – for civic purposes such as managing personal banking, setting up phones and tablets, tax returns and correspondence with organisations and institutions. Over 60 of the 69 respondents identified access to computers and assistance with civic literacies as important functions of the Learning Centre in their community. Respondents also stressed throughout the importance of Learning Centres in supporting employment readiness in a range of ways.

*We want more jobs for school leavers and help for them to go into jobs. They can do work experience, get licences, training and certificates. We have to support young people who are sometimes too shy to come and do things. They can do health and legal information courses so that they can understand things that they need to know when they are adults.*

(Lajamanu resident, survey interview)

A series of goals associated with more formal learning were also given by respondents. These included learning and training for young people, including secondary students. This focus on young people was echoed in the research more generally, with concerns for the safety and wellbeing of young people arising in discussion of various programs. A high number of respondents (49) identified English language and literacy as important for them, and this specific learning goal was identified ahead of more general learning and certificate training for adults. Warlpiri language and culture teaching and learning was also rated in this set of learning goals.

*Learning Centre is important for young ones and adults learning maths, English, computers. It's good when young people are working at Learning Centre. They open it up and help everyone with computers and phone and different things. It's important for the young ones to start to be workers and help our community.*

(Nyirripi resident, survey interview)

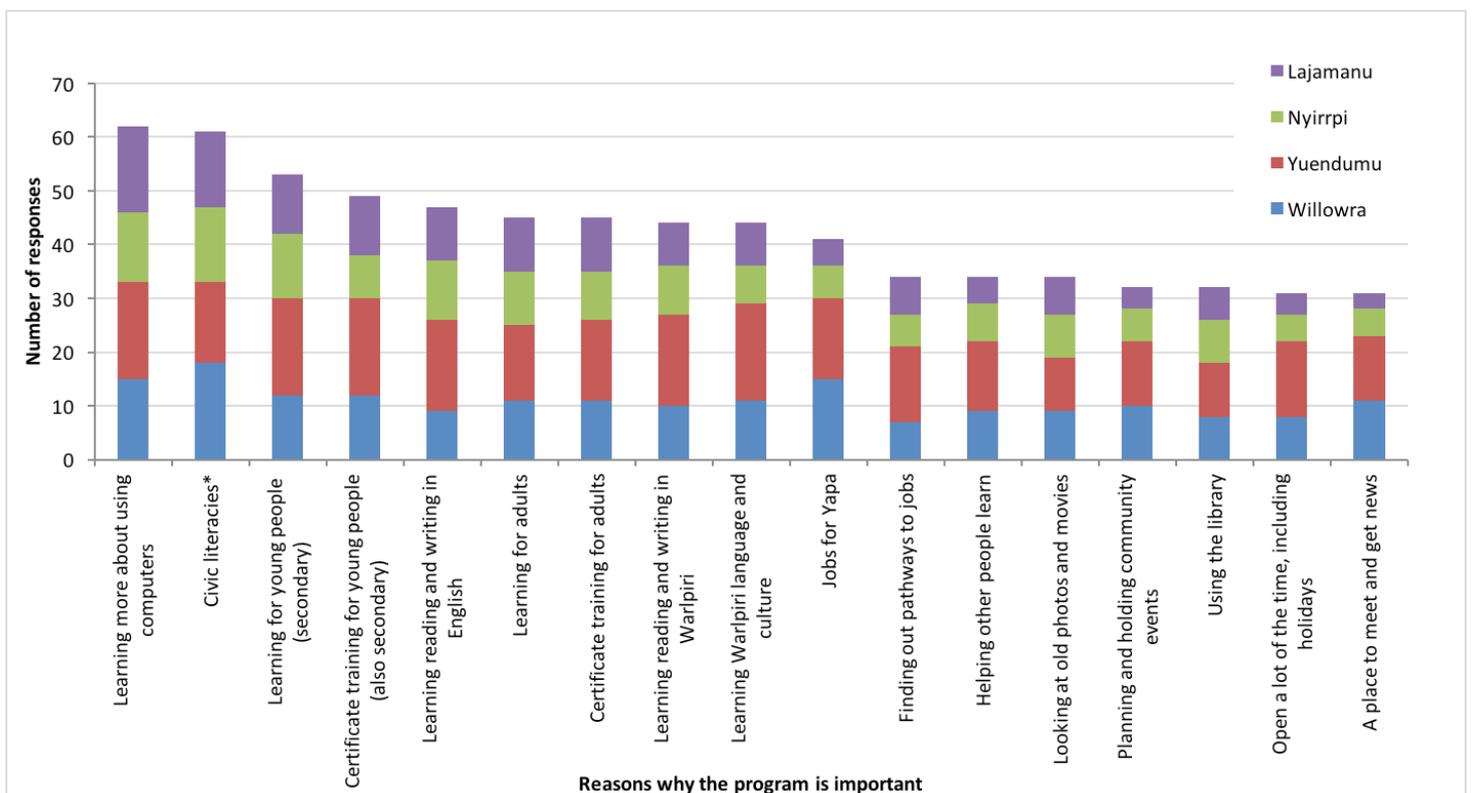
*People come to the Learning Centre for everything, licence, birth certificate, e-tax. It's our community centre. Rangers come and train. Young ones can do all or part of their education there. I graduated at the Learning Centre. Young ones also graduate at the Learning Centre. They know they are learning. The PACE project and cyber bullying work was at the Learning Centre. It brought a lot of people together to think about different problems and different solutions. The PACE project was a really important experience for me; it gave me new opportunities.*

(Yuendumu resident, survey interview)

Informal Learning Centre opportunities followed the more formal learning goals and were rated by around half of the respondents as important. These included viewing old movies and photos, holding community events, using the library, having flexible and extended opening times, peer learning and a place to find out news. The aspirations originally expressed by all four communities for Learning Centres during consultations for the Schwab Report (2006. p. 5) appear to have remained constant and in line with the policy set for Learning Centres by the WETT Advisory Committee. Schwab described:

*... a multifunctional community centre: a desire for a multifunctional community centre was mentioned in the notes for each community. The vision varied only slightly and involved a place, possibly but not necessarily separate from the school, where people could access technology (computers and the internet) and engage with learning.*

Figure 15 shows the responses to question ‘Why are Learning Centres important to you?’



\*Civic literacies = internet banking, password management, e-tax, résumé writing, forms and correspondence

Figure 15. Why is the Learning Centre important for you? (69 respondents)

Several respondents raised concern about the Learning Centre in their community closing due to staffing.

*Our Learning Centre needs to be open all the time.*

(Nyirрпи resident, survey interview)

*Lots of people do painting at the Learning Centre, that's good and they were making videos. Not much now. They should do more ... sometimes its closed, but it should be open all the time.*

(Willowra resident, survey interview)

The Review team did not ask all respondents explicitly about the partnership with Batchelor Institute, and it appears that community members were probably shielded from the difficulties Batchelor Institute and its coordinators faced in delivering the service. Interviews with centre coordinators all focused on the challenges of meeting the accredited training requirements, administrative loads and the day-to-day demands of providing the range of services expected from the Learning Centres. Through the course of the review, the WETT Advisory Committee considered the operation of the Learning Centres and in the September meeting decided to contract WYDAC to operate the Yuendumu Learning Centre in 2017 as a trial. This change of partners was not canvassed in community consultations.

## Discussion and recommendations

After 10 years of operation, each Learning Centre is at a different stage of establishment and is locally distinct. Looking forward, it is important to consider local strategic partnerships. For instance, the Jaru Learning Centre at Yuendumu has a clear synergy with WYDAC, given its close links. At Lajamanu, there are a number of workplaces – including the school, the CLC Rangers program and the aged care facility – with distinct learning and training needs. The arts centre has played an important community centre role in the past, and there is potential to team up and consolidate this.



While the Learning Centres run as a centralised program, they are well served by having the flexibility to foster local strengths, meet local needs and broker and collaborate to maximise opportunities. Spreading the workload of local coordinators can be facilitated by attracting learning and training opportunities facilitated by others into the Learning Centres. Programs offering legal, health, wellbeing and financial management learning and training run in remote communities. Capitalising on these allows Learning Centres to have a vibrant and varied set of activities and means that coordinators can focus on a limited number of specific learning

(above left) Lajamanu Learning Centre (source Batchelor Institute),

(right) WETT Advisory Committee members Markkirdi Rose and Valerie Patterson, Lajamanu 2014 (source CLC)

programs, such as evening literacy courses and media projects. The current arrangement with Batchelor Institute does not meet this approach particularly well. A model that allows the strategic deployment of resources from different organisations to provide all four communities with opportunities for training and community education (e.g. InDIGImob, Lifeline, Sexual Health Headquarters), as well as community activities such as young women’s groups will better suit the aspirations of the community and WETT’s investment in community learning. Recommendation 22 proposes that the program be redesigned with greater flexibility and coordination through employment of a Learning and Training Resource Broker. This position would collaborate with local coordinators, local staff and the local reference group to identify learning and training needs and opportunities. They would be responsible for researching learning and training programs and, importantly, funding sources. Accredited training would be brokered in from the most suitable provider, and that provider would be responsible for delivery of the program, with support where possible from the Learning Centre. As the pilot programs for operation of the Learning Centres in 2017 are still underway (WYDAC at Yuendumu and Batchelor Institute in the other three communities), the Review cannot yet recommend a preferred partner. However, research in February 2017 indicates that WYDAC has already instigated a program of brokered learning and training activities.

Local staffing for the Learning Centre would be prioritised through Recommendation 4, local employment strategy.

Finally, the Review team was asked to explore adult language and literacy programs and models. English language and literacy are key to participation in all learning, training and in many activities in and outside of the community. Community members expect that teaching and learning English language and literacy takes place in the Learning Centres. The Review team was asked specifically to consider the Yes, I Can program. It found it unsuitable to the Warlpiri context for several reasons, including its focus on literacy rather than language learning, and its short and intensive delivery mode. Appendix 2 elaborates alternatives. Language and literacy are best learned incrementally and purposefully. Some Learning Centre co-ordinators have had Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) adult learning qualifications and backgrounds, and have been skilful in embedding language and literacy learning in activities and training programs. This is an important element in ensuring that training is effective.



Njirpi Learning Centre Construction training 2011 (source Batchelor Institute)

## Strong partnerships and programs (RQ 3)

### Summary

WETT conceives of, funds and monitors programs; it does not implement them. Appraisal of programs over the last 10 years and consultations with the WETT Advisory Committee, community members and stakeholders have highlighted the importance of partnerships and partner qualities for program success. These matters, and the strategic recommendation for use of WETT resources to influence policy and practice, are discussed in this section. Evaluation, particularly the application of participatory approaches to co-develop shared aims and agreed goals, is key to stronger partnerships.

### Partnerships for policy and practice leverage

Implementing WETT programs is ultimately the task of partner organisations. The Advisory Committee has considered the qualities of a good partner in the past (Campbell & Hunt, 2010, p. 13) and revisited this in the September 2016 meeting, as part of the Review. The following qualities were identified:

- Balanced and Two-Way (and a shared understanding of these terms)
- Understanding of and commitment to a long-term involvement with WETT's Vision and to Warlpiri culture
- Yapa up front: expertise and commitment to local governance
- Employment strategies to ensure that Warlpiri are employed and upskilled
- A good reputation and record: robustness of the organisation and expertise in delivering programs in a remote context
- Consistency of organisational goals and practices across levels within the organisation and over time
- Manages the challenge of recruitment and retention of suitable Kardiya, providing orientation and support and has strategies in place to manage programs when positions are vacant
- Brings along resources that Warlpiri need
- Accesses funding successfully from a diverse range of sources
- Capacity to maintain and foster positive partnerships with WETT and with other players.

Consideration of existing documents and interviews with partner organisation staff shows that negotiating and managing relationships is complex. Certainly, the WETT Advisory Committee has learned a great deal about partnering for implementation in the last 10 years. It has had positive, enduring and productive partnerships; WYDAC is a case in point. The partnership with WVA to operate the Early Childhood program, on the other hand, was costly in terms of negotiation and funding and the progress and outcomes were insufficient.

The notion of 'partnership' is not straightforward, as WETT enters contractual agreements for services with partner organisations and holds them to account for these services. Partner organisations do not always come with the qualities listed above, or hold the same vision and aspirations as WETT for the programs. It is clear through the Review research that the requisite qualities, shared vision and understanding of aspiration must be fostered throughout the

establishment and maintenance of the partnership. As in all relationships, issues of mutual understanding, goodwill and power are all at play. Where partner organisations share aspirations and the vision for the program, which is the case for WYDAC, program implementation faces fewer challenges. Where partner organisations' core goals and business are less aligned to WETT's, mutual understanding needs to be built and constantly revisited. The CLC CDU staff work to do this; however, this task needs to be more explicit and involve Warlpiri people to a greater extent in this work. Evaluation has an important role to play here and is discussed below.

WETT's power is based on two mechanisms: the funds it provides to partner organisations and the cultural capital it holds as a local initiative designed and funded to advance Warlpiri aspirations. These mechanisms are maximally activated when partner organisations see value in these. These issues are discussed with respect to specific partnerships and are linked to Review recommendations.

### Partnership with Newmont

Newmont Asia Pacific has been a supportive WETT partner since 2006. It provides the Trust's income. It keeps communication channels open, sharing accessible and up-to-date information about the mine and its revenue to WETT through its representation on the Advisory Committee. Its staff reported a positive relationship with WETT and praise for the Advisory Committee and the CLC and WETT's processes. It values the cultural capital its partnership with WETT yields, though its key interest is greater employment opportunities in the region, rather than the broader WETT and community goals, discussed in section Review Findings 1. Newmont's commitment to local employment has not yielded results to date, and ongoing collaborations with the CLC and its own evaluation are seeking to further address this.

### Partnership with Central Land Council

The CLC CDU administers WETT and facilitates WETT planning and decision-making processes. The function arises from the CLC's role as agents for Kurra Aboriginal Corporation, the traditional owners of the Granites mine site and ultimate decision-makers for the allocation of WETT funds. WETT contributes funding for two full-time CLC positions, which is distributed in the CLC between a number of staff, including legal and finance staff who work on WETT programs and administration. The partnership is strong and CLC staff have a close relationship with all WETT operations. The Review found the CDU staff to be committed and highly engaged with the WETT Advisory Committee and the programs. There is clear understanding and support for Warlpiri aspirations and goals and considerable understanding of the context and history of the WETT-funded programs. The Review found a strong commitment and investment by the CLC in governance and developing capacity. The WETT Advisory Committee (AC) meet only three times per year, though the CLC CDU staff liaise frequently with WETT AC members throughout the year. The CLC CDU works very effectively in organising and facilitating the meetings. However, the Review finds that a further step to maximise these would be the organisation of a regular teleconference before each meeting so that the AC can discuss the agenda and key issues. The information load and English language demands on the Committee during the meetings is great. Pre-meeting teleconferences would allow the AC to prepare, discuss and clarify matters in Warlpiri. This would increase the capacity of the Advisory Committee to take a more active role in meetings and help with induction of new members (Recommendation 29).

The relationship between WETT and the CLC CDU is also very deep, as the WETT program is the flagship of the Unit and has really allowed CLC to develop its expertise and practice in community development. The work between the CLC CDU and the WETT Advisory Committee members has both fed into and been guided by the CLC CDU Framework (Central Land Council, 2016). The engagement of a new CDU manager during the Review brings fresh eyes to the Unit and the WETT program. The development of suitable monitoring and evaluation programs and its adoption and embedding in all programs will benefit from this new perspective.

The next step in this partnership should be guided by Recommendation 4, with the WETT Advisory Committee and the CLC CDU identifying and planning ways that Warlpiri can be employed by the Unit to work locally on WETT program administration. Initially this could be through the employment of a casual WETT Liaison Officer in each community, to grow capacity and lead to flexible part-time or, if required and appropriate, full-time positions. This would be a new role, and structures and resources would be required to provide sufficient supervision, support and interaction with the CDU team. A clear set of tasks, with clear routines, reporting and expectations, should be identified by the Unit. There may be scope for collaboration and local support from an existing WETT-funded program such as WYDAC or the Learning Centre, though in the implementation, if this is adopted, further exploration of this collaboration is required. The roles proposed are aligned to Recommendation 5, which encourages the strategic engagement of partner organisation. At the local level this should involve WETT Liaison Officers taking part in the proposed teleconference and attending and reporting on reference group activities; in the future, they would have a coordinating role in this.

## Partnership with Batchelor Institute

The Review finds that this relationship has several strong elements and challenges. The relationship is longstanding and complex. Batchelor Institute plays an important role in the operation of the Willowra Playgroup and has been crucial in the development of the four Warlpiri Learning Centres. As discussed in relation to those two programs, Batchelor Institute has successfully operated the Willowra Playgroup but struggled to meet the varied demands of the Learning Centre program. Its reporting has been consistently frank and clear. However, there is a tendency for underspend in areas such as Warlpiri staffing and redirection of funds to budget lines already well supported by WETT.

Until 2017, Batchelor Institute was the sole operator of the WETT-funded Learning Centres. In 2016, the WETT Advisory Committee recommended contracting WYDAC to operate the Learning Centre at Yuendumu. This recommendation, approved by Kurra WETT Directors, has been a controversial decision and has raised considerable concern for Batchelor Institute as it questions its status as partner or as a contractor.

Currently, Batchelor and WETT are linked with a range of funding agreements, with Batchelor still receiving close to \$1 million in 2017. The two entities are also linked by a complex web of leasing agreements for staff accommodation, buildings and infrastructure. There is a good deal invested on both sides and several friction points. For practical reasons, WETT has often made year-to-year contracts with Batchelor Institute, which signals fragility to Batchelor in the partnership. In addition to the perception impacts of this, there are practical issues, such as the difficulty in undertaking long-term planning and co-investment. Perhaps more significantly,



this poses insecurity of employment tenure to Batchelor Institute staff. A further friction point is the sense of ownership both partners have over the Learning Centres, which at times surfaces as increasingly mutually exclusive. These friction points should be clarified going forward.

Several Batchelor Institute Alice Springs staff have clearly been champions and advocates for collaboration between WETT and Batchelor, viewing the arrangement as a partnership. With staff and direction changes, along with new challenges for the Institute, the Review research found a shift in Batchelor's approach to WETT, though differing narratives were presented from different staff. Current leadership gives Batchelor's status as a service delivery organisation, with its own aims and processes, rather than as a collaborative partner to WETT and are clear that the arrangement is a service agreement. A key message from some Batchelor Institute staff was that they did not see the value of investment of Batchelor Institute resources, or resources from outside (e.g. government) in the Learning Centres or Willowra Playgroup. WETT's sizeable contracts with Batchelor Institute should be an important lever in future negotiations. Warlpiri educators as graduates from the earlier Batchelor College have been closely involved with the formation and enactment of the Two-Way philosophy that underpins Batchelor Institute, there is ground here for WETT to promote itself and be recognised as a valuable partner.

For this relationship to be reset, frank communication about shared goals would be required, and may not be achieved. The establishment of regular meetings with members of the Batchelor Executive would be vital to greater clarity of communication. Further, resetting the relationship, once a shared vision and ground rules are set, could lie in the co-design of future programs. One possible area to grow may be a broader program of training and research in Early Childhood, to benefit delivery of this program in the Warlpiri communities. Co-investment in a regional trainer may be part of a package with the NT DoE (Recommendation 26), and the Department could also be a partner in the Early Childhood program, given that it is now responsible for the FaFT programs in Lajamanu and Yuendumu and the Njirripi Crèche. External support in terms of both funding and design may prove important: a program such as the Growing Up Children in Two Worlds research project could consolidate the relationship between Batchelor Institute and WETT (see Appendix 2).

(above) Cecilia Granites, Barbara Martin, Nancy Oldfield,  
Batchelor Graduation, Alice Springs 2013 (source Batchelor Institute)

## Partnership with WYDAC

The partnership with WYDAC is open and collaborative. Interviews with WYDAC staff indicate respect for the WETT Advisory Committee and a strong shared vision for learning and advancement in the Warlpiri communities. WYDAC has proven itself to be a capable partner, with good outcomes, community governance practices and reporting. To date, it has had a very stable management team and managed quite well the demands of recruitment and retention of staff in remote communities. Several foundational staff have left the organisation in recent times, and the outcomes of these transitions are yet to be clear. WYDAC is very clear that the funding WETT provides is critical for its operations and as a lever for accessing further funding.

*With WETT, we were in Willowra already with government funding but WETT made it more possible. But we only went into Lajamanu and Nyirripi through WETT funding, so not a dollar of government funding at first. After a year, we were able to turn around to government and say, 'Look at what this community has done. They've invested, look at the results, look at the community leadership.' This is about thinking about what has worked with government in terms of turning community leadership and community dollars and community action and putting that on the table really strongly to government and saying, 'Match this; at the very least, match this.' And we are doing it at the moment with the Lajamanu thing again. The money is huge and powerful, but the leadership is really the thing. Not just to have Lottie and Eddie our chairpersons, it's being able to say to government, 'Warlpiri people are leading the way; catch up to us, we'll show you the way'.*

(WYDAC manager, interview)

WETT has a good deal to learn from this strategic thinking and operation. Just as WYDAC is using its funds from WETT to leverage further support, WETT should be doing the same. This is the crux of Recommendation 3, the strategic engagement with partners.

While there is a positive and respectful relationship with WYDAC, and WYDAC uses WETT funding as a strategic lever, acknowledgement of WETT's significant financial contribution to WYDAC is not evident in most publications and statements by WYDAC. There is no trace of WETT on WYDAC's informative and attractive website and Facebook page. Its contribution is acknowledged in the body of the annual reports, but it is not prominently placed with its logo, where several other funders are. WETT needs to be much more assertive in assuring that its role is given greater prominence.

## Partnerships with Early Childhood providers

WETT has not had a direct partnership with Early Childhood programs in the Warlpiri communities, as this was mediated by WVA from 2008 to 2013. Unfortunately, WVA was not effective in the development of partnerships with local providers, and its operations orbited but rarely made an impact in the services. Ultimately, its activities were restricted to supporting reference groups, which similarly appear too often to have 'sat on the outside' of local programs and some professional learning opportunities. WVA has announced it will cease its involvement in Warlpiri Early Childhood programs in 2017. This leaves both a vacuum and an opportunity for WETT, but an opportunity with a new challenge.

If WETT wishes to continue to support and have some influence on the operations of Early Childhood programs in the four communities, it must design a program that accepts the fragmented state of play, with a range of diverse local services and providers, in the short to medium term at least. The Review does not find that the centralised program attempted by WVA fits this current scene. Rather, the Review finds that WETT should consider a couple of approaches. First, it recommends that WETT work with services initially by funding a small



number of initiatives and grow the relationships with Life without Barriers (Lajamanu), NT DoE in FaFT at Lajamanu, Yuendumu and Nyirripi Crèche and with Central Desert Council at Yuendumu Childcare Centre. The focus should be on strengthening the link between local reference groups and services to increase the capacity of reference groups to have some steerage over practice in the services. In addition, the Review recommends an overarching program of family support (Recommendation 10).

## Partnerships with boarding providers and secondary transition programs

Several Review recommendations focus on improving the opportunities and outcomes for students undertaking secondary education outside of the communities (Recommendations 14-17). A number involve making more direct links to boarding providers. Fostering relationships with transition programs such as the Aurora Foundation and The Smith Family are important to building a solid foundation for Warlpiri students' success in boarding school education. See Appendix 2 for a description of these programs.

## Partnership with the Northern Territory Department of Education

To date, the implementation of WETT-funded programs relevant to the NT DoE has been either dependant on the inclination and goodwill of individual school principals and/or very fragmented (support to early childhood, youth services, Learning Centres). Yet, the relationship between the NT DoE and WETT is crucial to the performance of specific programs and their expansion in the future. The Review finds that there is a great need for WETT to reposition itself with government departments as a significant financial player and regional authority, with resultant leverage. Recommendations 1 and 3 seek to embed more strategic use of partnerships for leverage, advocacy and policy change.

| (above) Nyirripi Playgroup 2011 (source World Vision)

Given WETT is an education-relevant program, the NT DoE (currently under Minister Lawler) appears to be the most relevant department to partner with. This is not to rule out the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Territory Families or even the Department of Housing and Community Development, should these departments or ministers (currently Chief Minister Gunner, Ministers Wakefield and McCarthy) present as alternative or additional partners. This might be developed in collaboration with WYDAC, which has not only shown itself to be a high-quality partner with WETT, but an effective organisation in its partnerships with other agencies and governments.

Currently, the relationship with NT DoE generally positions WETT as a collaborator to meet the Department's goals; however, this needs to be flipped so that the partnership is pursued to support WETT's goals and, of course, the Department's where there are overlaps. This is in line with the stronger advocacy approach underpinning Review recommendations. The metaphor of an umbrella was proposed by the WETT Advisory Committee at the March 2017 meeting. The umbrella is an overarching shelter, symbolising the partnership, policies and practices agreed upon by WETT and NT DoE as protection from changing policy and staff. The notion of an umbrella may materialise as a regional agreement, regional charter or Warlpiri Group School. Such a structure may piggyback on the Indigenous Education Review (IER) Implementation Strategy to develop school charters, though the prospect of a Warlpiri Group School is unlikely, given moves to greater school autonomy and global funding arrangements. Discussions with the Minister in March 2017, and with the IER Implementation Officer for Central Australia, indicated that the notion of a charter is a good foundation for an agreement. Of course, the WETT Advisory Committee is circumspect, recalling the time it invested in the 2007–2008 Regional Partnership Agreement, only to have the entire process rendered irrelevant with a policy change. Nevertheless, discussions have begun and must be proactively pursued.

Renewed negotiations should stress Warlpiri aspirations and financial commitment. WETT supported programs have clear overlaps and synergies both in terms of achieving NT DoE policy goals and, on the ground, benefits to students, families and schools. Review recommendations have sought to draw on this alignment – centring on language in schools, transition to boarding, support secondary delivery.



## Links between programs for stronger education and learning outcomes (RQ 4)

### Program, partner and community links

Greater connection between reference groups and boards, program staff across communities and within communities will increase the capacity of all programs and stakeholders, in terms of program delivery, employment and governance. This should be embedded in both the WETT vision and mission statements and in funding agreements. A range of communication methods and processes can facilitate greater connection: workshops, meetings, regular teleconferences and skype link-ups. The proposed WETT communication strategy (Recommendation 28) will also play an important role.

Some partner organisations already provide opportunities for their staff across the communities to come together, network and share, in some cases already supported through WETT funding. The Warlpiri Triangle and Jinta Jarrimi meetings, central to Warlpiri school programs, are a long-term established model for this. This professional network has been the impetus for WETT and so has had a profound impact on learning, education and training beyond schools for the four communities. The proposal to the NT DoE for a Warlpiri Group School or similar network would foster these links between education programs and staff.

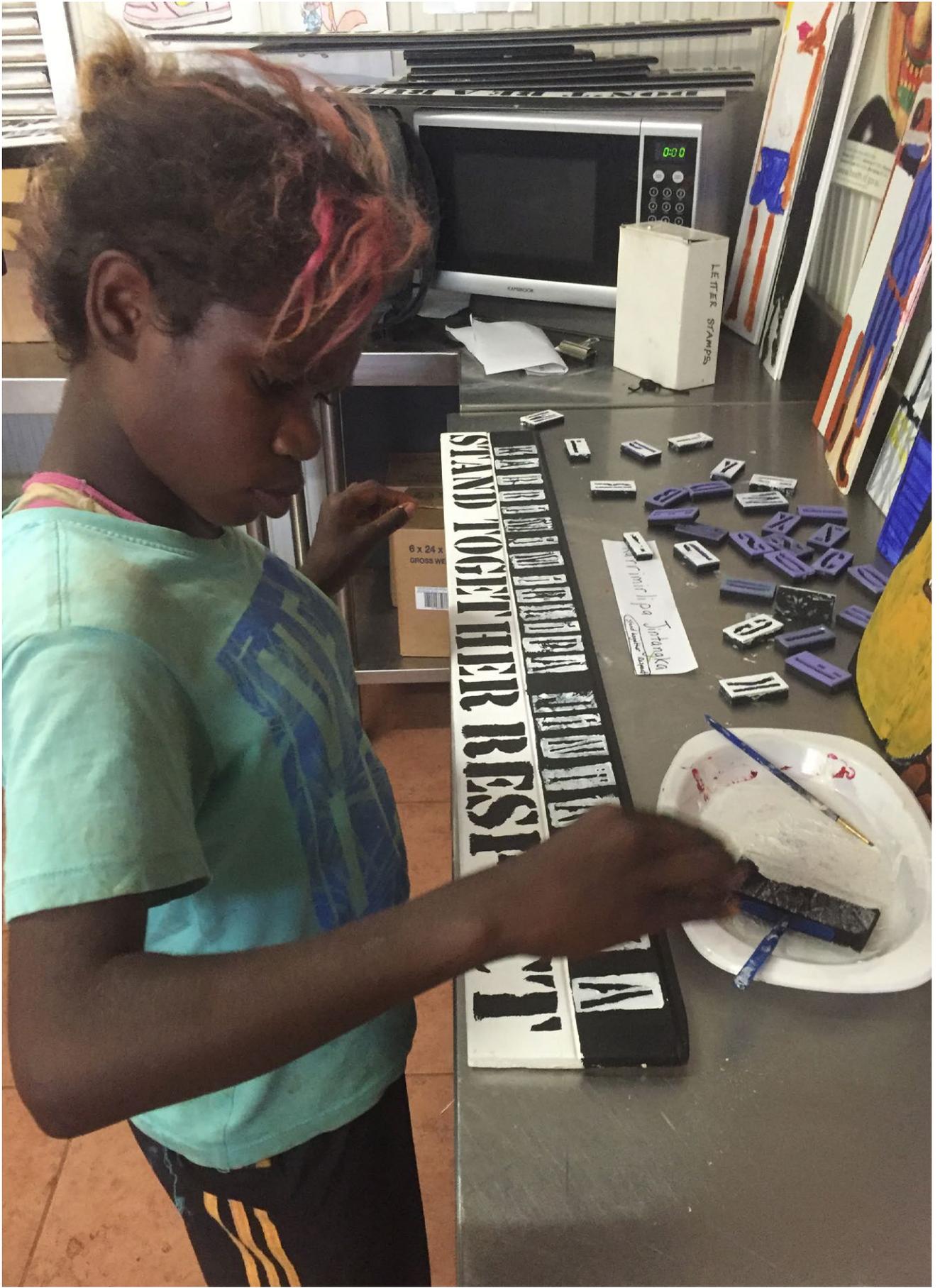
WYDAC brings its staff together for regular events, including strategic planning and professional learning. Respondents in Review consultations spoke highly of a recent gathering of Jaru (young leaders) and staff at Mt Theo Outstation. The WETT Advisory Committee discussed being involved in the organisation of such a forum in 2018 to garner input into the review recommendations and implementation. The Child Safety weekend and SNAICC conference have provided opportunity for Early Childhood staff to share their experience and practice and to discuss common issues for the four communities, as well as learn from others. The flexible fund proposed in Recommendation 9 seeks to encourage Early Childhood services and reference groups in the communities to take greater carriage of and responsibility for these events after WVA has ceased its support. Responsibility may fall to local reference groups to drive services for better staff networking, and the funding program proposed may include this in its guidelines. Activities to be funded or encouraged could include visits to other Warlpiri Early Childhood services. Batchelor Institute has provided some opportunity in the past for Kardiya coordinators, through its planning meetings; however, consultation with these staff indicated that greater networking was required. Fewer opportunities for Yapa have been available; these should be increased.

Within communities, there is some collaboration and networking between programs. At Willowra the co-location of the Playgroup, Learning Centre and WYDAC building have encouraged collaboration. At Yuendumu, WYDAC is most active and well resourced, and this has been conducive to productive collaboration between Youth Development programs, the Learning Centre and, with the current high level of resourcing and enthusiasm at the school, also with Yuendumu School. Less collaboration and contact between services at Nyirripi and Lajamanu was documented. These matters could be part of an evaluation framework.

Several mechanisms to increase cohesion between programs and communities are proposed, and these are generated from within organisations. A centralising, external way to achieve this may be through the employment of a WETT officer in each community, as a medium to longer term element of the Warlpiri employment strategy (Recommendation 4).



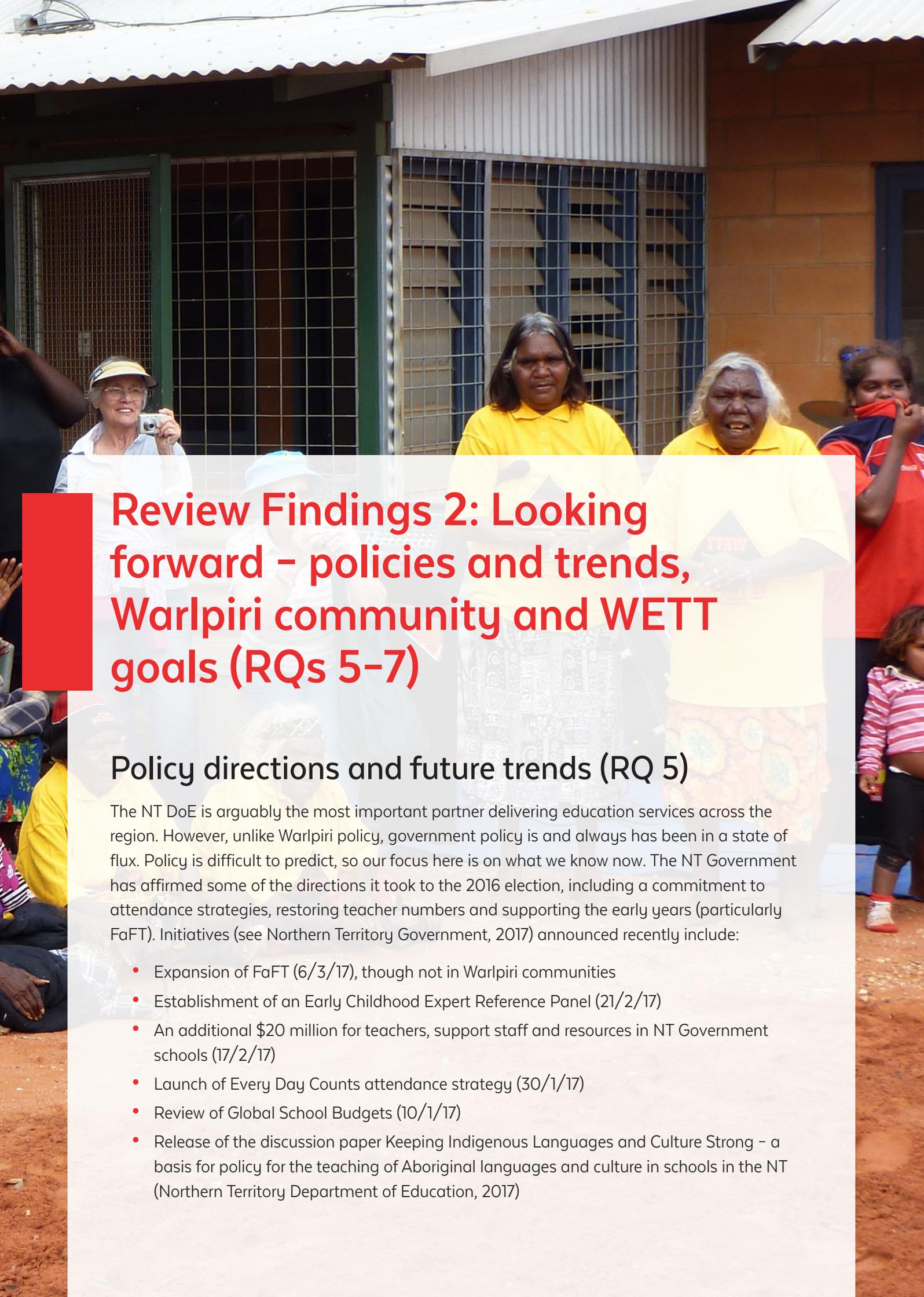
| Youth Program, Willowra, Nov 2016 (source CLC)



| Dont be a bully mural workshop, Willowra 2016 (source Wydac)



| Njiripi Learning Opening Launch 2010 (source CLC)



## Review Findings 2: Looking forward – policies and trends, Warlpiri community and WETT goals (RQs 5–7)

### Policy directions and future trends (RQ 5)

The NT DoE is arguably the most important partner delivering education services across the region. However, unlike Warlpiri policy, government policy is and always has been in a state of flux. Policy is difficult to predict, so our focus here is on what we know now. The NT Government has affirmed some of the directions it took to the 2016 election, including a commitment to attendance strategies, restoring teacher numbers and supporting the early years (particularly FaFT). Initiatives (see Northern Territory Government, 2017) announced recently include:

- Expansion of FaFT (6/3/17), though not in Warlpiri communities
- Establishment of an Early Childhood Expert Reference Panel (21/2/17)
- An additional \$20 million for teachers, support staff and resources in NT Government schools (17/2/17)
- Launch of Every Day Counts attendance strategy (30/1/17)
- Review of Global School Budgets (10/1/17)
- Release of the discussion paper Keeping Indigenous Languages and Culture Strong – a basis for policy for the teaching of Aboriginal languages and culture in schools in the NT (Northern Territory Department of Education, 2017)

Beyond these recent announcements, the NT DoE continues to roll out elements of its Indigenous Education Strategy. Of significance to WETT are school community charters and initiatives around transition support for boarding school students. Further, following the WETT Advisory Committee's meeting with Minister Lawler on 29 March, it is clear that there will be a focus on 'community-led schools'. Labor's 2016 policy document on education states that:

*Labor will introduce Community Led Schools into remote communities.*

*Decision-making on the educational path of Community Led Schools will be placed into the hands of remote communities. They will be supported by government in making the best decisions for the education of their children. (Territory Labor, 2016, p. 4)*

The Review sees opportunities to leverage additional support from the Department from areas of mutual interest and benefit. The community-led schools policy is a clear invitation for each school to have a strong school council, which sets the agenda for priorities within a global school budget framework. While WETT itself would probably not want to engage at the school level, the Minister was open to the possibility of a regional advisory group for all Warlpiri schools.

While the NT Government has its sights on the above, it is also bound by federal priorities, which provide more resources but also demand more compliance. The recent Closing the Gap report (Turnbull, 2017) highlights some of these priorities. Among these are early childhood education participation, school attendance and literacy and numeracy. The report supports strategies such as scholarships and mentoring and VET for secondary-aged students, among other initiatives. The above educational strategic policy directions have been at the fore of the Review team's thinking in making recommendations. The other policy area that is likely to change soon is CDP, which has largely failed to meet the Australian Government's expectations and is reportedly having a negative effect on participants and their families (Jordan & Fowkes, 2016). It will be important to see what opportunities may arise from these changes.

One area where a policy gap exists, is in non-formal adult learning. Both the Australian Government and the NT Government focus heavily on the need for VET foundation skills (particularly through the Skills for Education and Employment program) towards employment. Funded opportunities are limited for those who want to pursue adult learning but are not looking for work or who are seeking learning and/or skills development not explicitly linked to an existing employment opportunity. The NT Government does not have an adult learning policy. The specific language, literacy and numeracy learning needs of adults learning in English as an Additional Language are not addressed or well serviced. Furthermore, funded programs that support first language literacy are almost non-existent.

The Review team is aware that there are several social trends that should be considered for future directions of new programs. These trends include:

- Policy to encourage and ensure early years learning, though the National Early Childhood Quality Framework and Early Years Learning Framework (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2015; 2017)
- Growing significance of technology as a means of improving access to learning, social relationships, potential disadvantages of distance, and health care (see for example Kral, 2012; Kral & Schwab, 2012)

- Increasing trend of year 12 completion and post-school qualifications (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 2016)
- Increasing political support for boarding school solutions to overcome the limitations of secondary provision (Northern Territory Department of Education, 2016)
- Renewed attention to the problem of growing imprisonment rates (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 2016) and particularly youth detention in the NT (White, 2015)
- Growing concerns about youth mental health and suicide (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 2016)
- Growing concerns about the increasing rates of child protection notifications (up 250% in five years in the NT) and substantiations (up 10% in five years in the NT) (Department of Children and Families, 2016).



| Lajamanu School Country Visit, 2010 (source Lajamanu School)

## New WETT programs aligned to Warlpiri community aspirations for learning, education and training (RQs 6, 7)

It should be noted that the number of new or innovative ideas identified by community members or the WETT Advisory Committee was quite small. In part this may be simply due to limited exposure to what might be possible, reflecting ‘can’t be what you can’t see’ (Kinnane et al., 2014). The Review team has not recommended any new program areas, but rather fine-tuning and expansion of the existing programs, as outlined in the Recommendations. New programs or projects will fit neatly under the umbrella of existing program areas.

Figure 16 is an attempt to summarise the potential achievements of WETT in the next 10 years. The diagram, as with the earlier representations of what has and has not been achieved, sets out the mechanisms and processes that lead to the projected achievements. As with the previous diagrams, the projected outcomes are divided into two sections, those attributable to WETT, CLC and Newmont; and those attributable to program partners. The projected achievements are to a large extent aligned to recommendations. Of course, these are subject to approval and dependent on a commitment to resourcing. In the following discussion, we attempt to map the overarching impacts (right-hand column) to recommendations and the corresponding logic.

**Improved accountability, performance and advocacy capacity** are underpinned by several mechanisms foreshadowed in our strategic directions recommendations. Foundational to these mechanisms is the articulation of WETT’s vision and mission (Recommendation 1). This will facilitate improved communication to partners about what WETT stands for (Recommendation 3) and **improved community awareness of WETT** (Recommendation 28). The vision and mission statements will assist with the development of an implementation plan (Recommendation 2). Ultimately the proposed monitoring and evaluation framework foreshadowed in Recommendation 5 will guide new contracts with program learning, development and improvement in mind. **Improved employment pathways** (Recommendation 4) will also be supported by the above mechanisms.

**WETT Advisory Committee renewal and sustainability** has been a concern for some time. Hence, we have recommended a small expansion of the structure (Recommendation 29) and an election process (Recommendation 30), coupled with selection of matching proxies (Recommendation 31) and a program of training for members and proxies (Recommendation 32). These measures will not only strengthen the structure; they will also increase the capacity of the Committee in the coming years.

WETT’s ongoing support for Early Childhood programs was affirmed during the Review. The Review team believes that **improved early childhood professional learning** is important to underpin this desire. In part, we see this being achieved through a flexible early childhood fund (Recommendation 9) so that the various organisations managing Early Childhood programs can better equip their staff. It will also be achieved with continued support of the Willowra Playgroup (Recommendation 7), with some modification of the coordinator’s role (Recommendation 8). Beyond this, we envisage the need for a Learning and Training Resource

Broker (Recommendation 22) to identify training providers and funding to meet training needs in the four communities. The inclusion of a broker in a new model of Learning Centre provision (Recommendation 21) allows local staff to get on with the job of supporting non-formal and informal learning needs in the community. We see these two mechanisms working hand in hand to create **more training and apprenticeship opportunities**, particularly for young people. The revised model is also a vehicle for achieving **greater Warlpiri involvement as support workers** in Learning Centres, and providing **improved adult learning opportunities** more generally.

One of the common themes emerging from the Review was the **need for strong families**: stronger parents mean stronger children. This is in part why we have suggested a shift in focus from Early Childhood to Families and Children (Recommendation 6). While there are some parenting programs such as FaFT in communities, we see a need to expand the reach of these activities with new family strengthening programs (Recommendation 10).

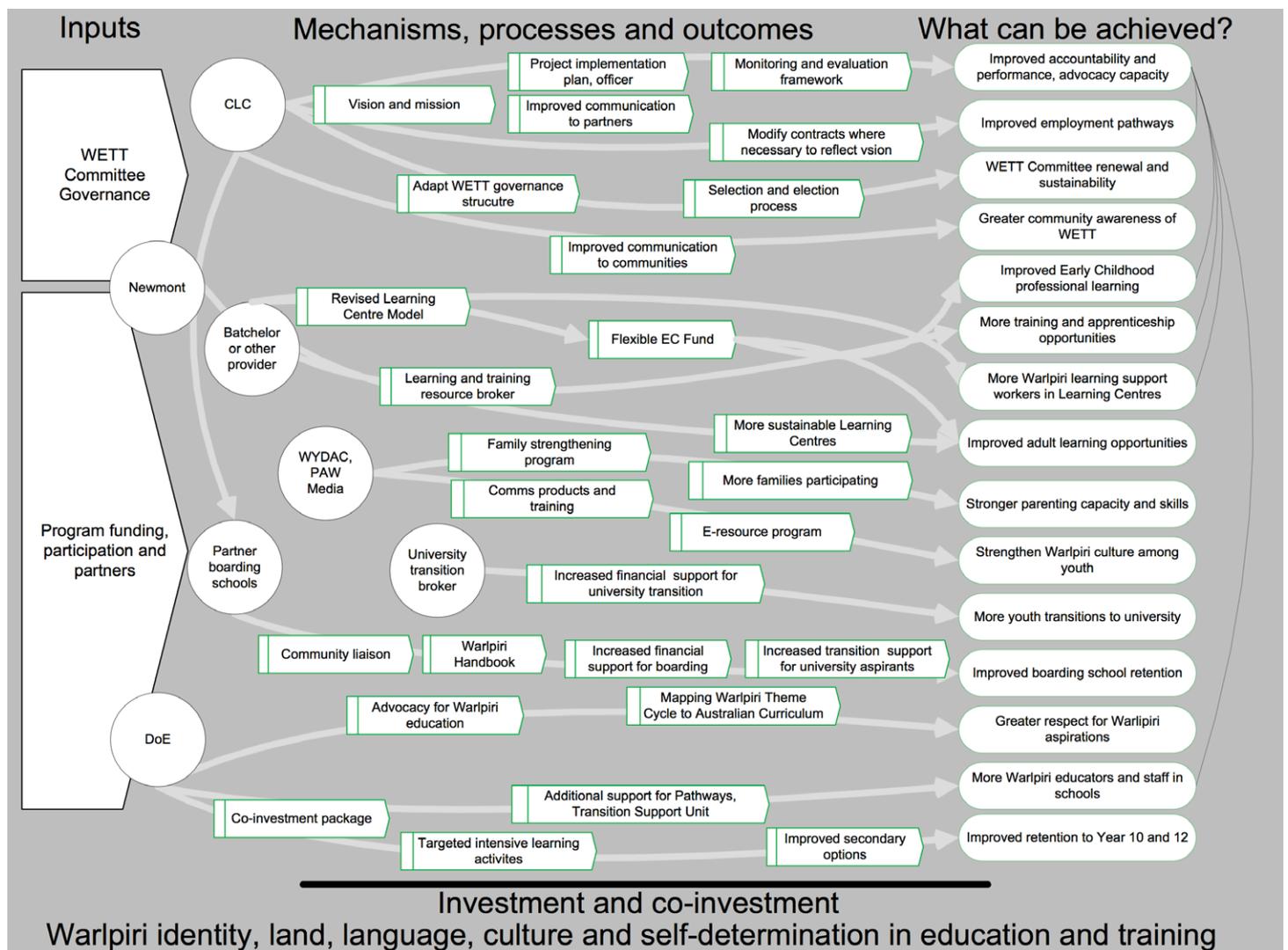


Figure 16. What could be achieved in the next 10 years? Mechanisms, processes and intermediate outcomes

The Review team recognised the value of existing youth programs (Recommendation 20). Noting some of the trends likely to affect Warlpiri young people into the future, we see opportunities to **strengthen Warlpiri culture among youth**. WYDAC and PAW Media's work in this area will be instrumental, and we see new opportunities for young people to be engaged in the development of a range of communications products (Recommendation 28 and Recommendation 17), coupled with a project to develop e-resources (Recommendation 25). We expect that **more youth will transition to university** for education in the coming years. To support this, we have recommended the establishment of a university transition fund (Recommendation 23) to be managed by a university transition broker.

The Review team expects that over time more Warlpiri young people will transition to boarding schools. However, retention has been a problem, and an important outcome will be to improve **boarding school retention**. There are several ways that resources can be directed to facilitate this outcome. First, it is important to work with schools that are recognised for their ability to look after Warlpiri young people well, hence we suggest that while existing arrangements for student support should remain (Recommendation 15), with better communication to boarding schools (Recommendation 14), working with a select group of preferred schools will make the job easier (Recommendation 16). In this area, there are many shared interests between WETT and the NT DoE. Hence a co-investment package that advances advocates for these shared interests will be important (Recommendation 26), for example in the employment of local liaison staff. The need for more **Warlpiri educators in schools** is another related outcome which we see as important. The co-investment package would also support the need for more secondary options for young people with a view to **improved retention to Year 10 and Year 12**. The continuation of the secondary school support program (Recommendation 18) with greater focus on boarding school visits, coupled with a program of targeted special interstate visits (Recommendation 19) will further assist achievement of this outcome.

The Review team is keen to ensure that the NT DoE exhibits **greater respect for Warlpiri aspirations**. To achieve this, we have proposed that WETT bundle all its language and culture programs together, to demonstrate its significant investment for these programs (Recommendation 11) and continue its support for all activities in that program area (Recommendation 12). Earlier, we noted the need for a stronger advocacy role for WETT. To support the work with the NT DoE, the Review team has recommended a special project to map the Warlpiri Theme Cycle to the Australian Curriculum (Recommendation 13). One of the roles for WETT envisaged under Recommendation 3 is the establishment of a regional education advisory group to support the sustained development of Warlpiri Language and Culture programs.



(top) Youth Program, Willowra, Nov 2016 (source CLC)

(bottom left) Dont be a bully mural workshop, Willowra 2016 (source Wydac)

(bottom right) WETT Community Information night, Lajamanu, 2014 (source CLC)



| WETT Community Information night, Lajamanu, 2014 (source CLC)

A photograph of three Indigenous women sitting outdoors in a community setting. The woman on the left is wearing a black t-shirt and is smiling. The woman in the middle is wearing a red sleeveless top and has a serious expression. The woman on the right is wearing a black and white patterned sleeveless top and also has a serious expression. In the background, there are wooden poles, trees, and a brick building.

## Review Findings 3: WETT Governance in the future (RQs 8, 9)

WETT is governed by its Trustee, the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation, which is made up of traditional owners of the Granites gold mine. The Kurra WETT Committee is comprised of Directors of the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation and meets twice a year to make funding decisions about WETT programs. The WETT Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the Kurra WETT Committee. (Figure 17).

The WETT Advisory Committee comprises three community representatives from each of the communities of Willowra, Lajamanu, Nyirripi and Yuendumu, and one representative from Newmont Mining, one representative from the Central Land and an independent member with education expertise. The WETT Advisory Committee meets three times each year. The CLC, through its CDU, actively facilitates these governance arrangements, including supporting program planning, decision-making processes and program implementation.

## WETT Governance Structure and Decision Making

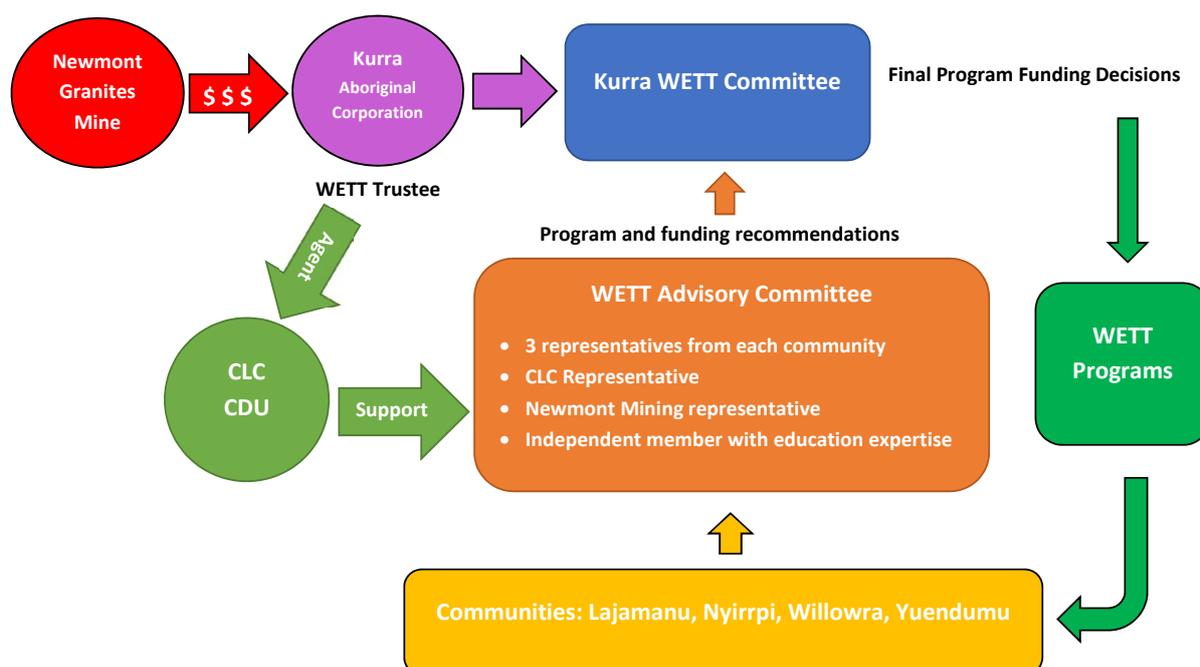


Figure 17. WETT Governance Diagram 2017

There were reservations by some Kurra Aboriginal Corporation members about Warlpiri royalty monies being used to pay for community service delivery in the early days (Hunt & Campbell, 2016, p. 4). However, the relationship between the WETT Advisory Committee and the Kurra WETT Committee has grown in understanding and trust over the decade. Review interviews with Kurra Directors showed good support for the WETT Advisory Committee, though concern was expressed by one Director that there are too few men on the WETT Advisory Committee. The Committee is indeed made up overwhelmingly of women, due mostly to the small pool of men expert in education, training and youth from which to draw Committee members. Another Kurra Director spoke of the need for the WETT Advisory Committee to include people from the programs it funds, such as WYDAC, promoting involvement of younger people and strong governance as broader goals for both WETT and Kurra:

*I am really impressed with WETT. They always report back to Kurra really well. [...] WYDAC should be more involved with the WETT Advisory Committee. They are a strong program, a strong group. It would help to make all the programs stronger. [...] We want there to be strong young people to carry on what we do and what WETT has been doing for 10 years. We need to make sure that our bright young people are getting involved. They need to have cultural side and whitefella system. Reference groups and community governance is the most important for this, for two ways.*

Three Kurra Directors attended the July 2016 WETT Advisory Committee meeting. The Committee members found her attendance and interest important for strengthening the relationship between the two Committees. The WETT Advisory Committee expressed interest in inviting the Kurra Advisory Committee members to the July 2017 meeting to discuss the Review findings together and in inviting Kurra Committee members to attend one meeting each year to maintain a strong and collaborative relationship.

## Representation by the current WETT Advisory Committee (RQ 8)

The WETT Advisory Committee members have demonstrated remarkable commitment to the design, operation and monitoring of the Trust and its programs, on a volunteer basis. The Committee members are overwhelmingly female, and most have extensive careers as teachers in schools. This has raised questions about the representativeness of the Committee. The Review found the Advisory Committee group to be well informed about and committed to all programs, largely due to their longstanding involvement with them in their own community, as a staff or reference group member, or by proactive engagement with programs, as discussed in the following quote. Given the largely female workforce in WETT-supported programs, female WETT members may be more effective in networking with program staff overall, though this is not to discount the important roles that capable and committed men could play.

*When I was on the Committee, before the meeting I used to drop in to all of the programs at Lajamanu and ask how things are going. Active and lively members are important. I used to hear from all of the programs, talk to them. Like after country visits and bush trips, ask them – what did you do? Talk to the teachers, elders, students. Be active and lively, going out and talking around the community, talking to people. For myself, I wanted to see how it was going. If it wasn't going well, I wanted to help find a resolution and take that back to WETT, let them know how the programs are going, what needs to be done to resolve problems. Instead of hearing problems from other people, I wanted to hear it for myself, first hand. That's what I enjoyed, talking face to face.*

(Former and founding Lajamanu WETT Advisory Committee member, interview)

The corporate memory the Advisory Committee members share means the group can effectively access, process and scrutinise information about the programs in the regular meetings they hold with partners. In recent years, there has been some employment shift with some of the Advisory Committee members moving from working at schools to employment in early childhood and adult learning services. As a result, Advisory Committee members have taken part in different organisational structures and governance processes, enriching the knowledge base of the Committee. One partner described his experience of working with the Committee:

*Our experience of the board (WETT Advisory Committee), as we report regularly, providing a written report and then oral presentation to the board. We have a lot of respect for the board. And across each of the communities over the years the group has been all women, and it's not for me to say how people got on there, but my experience is that they are the people who have taken ownership and run with it. And they have done the work. And they represent, from my perspective, informed decision-makers, both at a community level and also at an operational level. We find that when we present at that forum (WETT meetings) we get asked good questions, good tough questions. And it's probably the same for other programs, but they can be participants in our programs, parents of participants, and we get asked tougher questions from WETT than we do from federal government, which is a good thing. It teases out important issues and it helps us either clarify some things or refine things for the next period. They are much more informed questions than we get*

*from government. We just send the report off and they might come back and check some numbers. It's actually rare that we get service analysis. There are questions about service and about purpose and approaches. Some key questions or common ones are around bush trips and cultural programs but also training and pathways into jobs; that's a frequent priority and area where WETT gives us feedback, and has over the years, and we have moved our alignment in focus with that over time and in recognition of that feedback. And that has guided our own strategic development. It's an important feedback loop for us.*

(WYDAC Manager, interview)

The Advisory Committee members have undertaken some governance training over the years, but their skills have developed largely on the job. Members have spoken about the importance of further governance training, which will be increasingly necessary as new members join the Committee. The development of the WETT program, its Committee members and practices have fed into and been guided by the CLC CDU Framework. The Review team observed a high level of commitment and understanding of process and issues and collaboration between WETT Advisory Committee members and CLC staff, in communities and in meetings. The active and thoughtful participation and considered decision-making that takes place by all involved in these – often very long, intense and structured – meetings is impressive.

*WETT is going really well. Our meetings are good, the right time and length. The CLC people, Louise, Karina and, before, Georgie give us time and lots of information. It would be good to have teleconferences before WETT meetings so that we can talk about things before meetings. Maybe we can look at the agenda and make sure we know what we all want to talk about or maybe get ready for the meeting. It's good to bring other new and young people to meetings to listen and learn about WETT and WETT programs.*

(WETT Advisory Committee member)

Thus, in addition to governance training, improvements to practice could include the introduction of regular teleconferences to keep Advisory Committee members up to date. This would allow greater involvement of the Committee in setting and knowing the agenda for the meeting. Clearly, issues of succession, awareness and capacity-building are important.

As discussed previously in this report, some community members expressed their desire to know more about WETT and its operations, a goal shared by the WETT Advisory Committee. Information is disseminated through the Land Rights News and Community Development News. WETT and the CLC CDU have invested energy into community meetings and the WETT Forum at the 2016 Warlpiri Triangle annual school staff professional learning workshop at Lajamanu. These events have had mixed results. Review recommendations have been made to develop a communication strategy (Recommendation 28) and, through greater advocacy (Recommendation 3) and linkages between programs, increase community awareness about and commitment to WETT and its programs. Many respondents spoke proudly about the programs they have in their community coming from 'Warlpiri money'. This pride is a sense of ownership and should be built upon.

Renewing the membership of the Advisory Committee through public nominations or elections may be an important way to raise community awareness. Membership renewal may also be an important vehicle for bringing in different expertise and broader representation, particularly by targeting staff or reference group members from WETT-supported programs.

The current Committee is overwhelmingly made up of members who founded the Trust. This is both a strength and a vulnerability. Going forward, the expertise of the existing Advisory Committee members is crucial. Plans to revitalise the Committee and its methods for this have been explored over a number of years. The Committee has repeatedly expressed the need for younger people to join to develop skills and take up responsibilities for the Trust.

The election method also requires changes. Over a number of years, this was held at Warlpiri Triangle, which attracted school staff, elders and others experienced or interested in education and so provided a skilled and committed pool of potential Committee members. However, this event has lost prominence and is no longer a viable forum for elections.

In 2015, the Kurra WETT Committee approved a new community election process to elect WETT Advisory Committee members. Three members each from the four communities, plus a CLC representative, a representative from Newmont and two further expert members will constitute the new Committee, once elections take place. Proposals to include non-voting, 'observer' members have also been considered.

The CLC has recommended that the community elections for new WETT Advisory Committee members take place after the Review is completed and the existing Committee have considered its recommendations. Four recommendations are discussed below.



| WETT Advisory Committee and NT Education Minister Eva Lawler, Alice Springs 2017 (source CLC)

## WETT Advisory Committee in the future (RQ 9)

Four recommendations guide the recruitment of new Advisory Committee members: Recommendations 29–32. In the July and September 2016 WETT Advisory Committee meetings, members spent some time discussing the process of elections. While there was some agreement reached, no clear actions with timeframes resulted. The discussion was premised on the need for sustainability and renewal of the Committee into the future, together with the need to ensure adequate community representation. It centred on the role of members and proxies, the expertise required, what kind of person should be elected and steps needed before elections could be held. The Advisory Committee has developed a good position description for new members and has proposed processes for induction and mentoring.

It is recommended that the WETT Advisory Committee structure remain, with new members to increase the representation to an average of four members from each community (16 members, minimum 10 for a quorum) (Recommendation 29). We recognise that the numbers per community may vary, depending on availability of members.

At the March 2017 meeting, a proposal was put forward that eight members be selected to remain and all other positions be up for public election. There was some unease among the existing members, as restricting the number of continuing members would be divisive. We therefore suggest that those who are currently deemed by the Committee to be members remain as such. This number (10–12) is lower than the proposed 16 members. The number of new members to be nominated and elected is the difference (4–6 new members). Partner organisations such as WYDAC, PAW Media and WETT-supported programs such as Early Childhood should be actively encouraged to nominate staff and/or committee members to the WETT Advisory Committee.

Recommendation 30 proposes that current vacancies for Advisory Committee positions (to make up 16 members) be filled by a process of nomination and selection in 2018–2019 and community elections thereafter every two to three years. This provides a manageable process for building the committee without disrupting current members and for deliberations over and implementation of the Review recommendations before significant changes to election processes are made. For this process, we expect the nomination and selection of new members will be carried out by the Committee until there is clear direction for community-based elections.

The WETT Advisory Committee has benefited enormously from the extensive educational experience and insight held by its members, in particular with respect to school-based learning. A future Advisory Committee would benefit from the developing expertise of people working in programs supported by WETT, that is, those working in early childhood, youth services and in Learning Centres. These individuals would bring operational insights from their program and learning area, which could contribute to decision-making. At the same time, this would expand the representation on the Advisory Committee and, by creating tighter links between programs, also foster greater regional governance in education and training.

Proxies play an important role on the WETT Advisory Committee, as participants in meetings and as potential members. Currently, proxies are brought in to replace members as needed. There is no formal register of proxies and no clearly articulated statement about how they should function. Ad hoc processes of using proxies do not give those people a sense that they have a potentially longer term role. Proxies, along with members, should be formally identified or nominated (Recommendation 31) and undergo governance training and induction to the Advisory Committee, as proposed in Recommendation 32. Identified proxies will also make elections easier, as there will be a pool of potential candidates who will already have the required qualifications, experience and governance training. This final recommendation addresses induction for new members and proxies and continued governance training. Documentation over time and observation of the operations of the current Advisory Committee illustrate the effectiveness of the ongoing training and experience on the capacity of individual members and the Committee overall.



| Kurra WETT Directors Meeting, Nov 2015 (source CLC)





## Appendix 1: Detailed recommendations

Recommendations from the Review are detailed below. Each recommendation is accompanied with a rationale, the data sources that contributed to the recommendation, its anticipated outcomes, and links to other programs. Action steps and costs are provided in internal documentation to the Central Land Council and WETT.

### Strategic directions

#### Vision and mission

##### Recommendation 1:

We recommend that the WETT Advisory Committee formulates the vision, mission and strategic principles by which WETT operates.

##### Rationale

The Review has found a set of key themes that intersect in the community and WETT Advisory Committee consultation data. These include learning about Warlpiri culture and language, strengthening families, intergenerational learning, family involvement in education, education and training opportunities for young adults and employment opportunities. Overall, these themes form a critical nexus, in which Warlpiri culture and family are core mediators and drivers of learning, training, employment and life pathways for Warlpiri people.

There is no current clearly articulated statement of what WETT is and what its long-term goals are. The purpose of this recommendation is a) to feed into a forward-looking 10-year plan; b) to assist with communicating with stakeholders; and c) to act as a benchmark for future evaluations. Our thinking here is that WETT is not just a funder of programs, but has an active role to play for advocacy and setting education and training directions that align with Warlpiri aspirations.

### Relevant data sources

Historical documentary evidence (evaluation reports, funding agreements, monitoring reports) provided to the Review team by CLC CDU.

### Anticipated outcomes

Improves ability of WETT to communicate to community members, partner organisations and other stakeholders it seeks to work with and advocate to.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

Particularly relevant for governance and Recommendation 28 and other recommendations aligned to changes in strategic directions.

## Implementation and planning

### Recommendation 2:

We recommend that WETT commissions an implementation plan to facilitate action steps approved following this Review.

### Rationale

Implementation of approved recommendations will not happen without additional work. Current capacity within the CLC CDU team is limited. Therefore, WETT may need to outsource this action as a separate project. The role of the Implementation Officer will be largely to plan and design new and modified programs and projects, consistent with the vision and mission of WETT (Recommendation 1) and in consultation with the WETT Advisory Committee Kurra WETT Committee.

### Relevant data sources

Not applicable.

### Anticipated outcomes

The development of an implementation plan will act as a vehicle to support the 10-year plan foreshadowed in Recommendation 1.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

This links to all other recommendations and particularly those noted above.

## Communication and advocacy

### Recommendation 3:

We recommend that WETT communicates its long-term vision to, and engages with, its partners strategically to meet its long-term goals.

#### Rationale

The implementation of WETT-designed programs relies on the effectiveness of its partners. The relationships between WETT and its partners could be strengthened by greater shared understanding and alignment to WETT's long-term goals and its investment in programs. Recommendation 1 foreshadows a potential advocacy role for WETT. If this is adopted, articulation of WETT's long-term vision and goals must be understood by partners, effectively operationalising Recommendation 1. Advocacy, in this context, means ensuring that messages from WETT are heard and understood by partners. It means that within a 'partnership' that includes mutual benefits for the partners, WETT is not just reactive to the expectations of partners, but is proactive in setting the agenda in negotiations about activities and expected outcomes.

#### Relevant data sources

Interview data point to a disconnect between the goals of partners and the goals of WETT. This was particularly evident with the NT DoE, but also to a lesser extent with other stakeholders.

#### Anticipated outcomes

This strengthened relationship, based on clearly articulated strategic goals, might increase WETT's influence over programs, leverage in policy and implementation and potential to attract co-investment in WETT-supported programs.

#### Links to programs and other recommendations

This recommendation is underpinned by Recommendations 1 and 2. The communication strategy (Recommendation 28) will also serve to better inform community members of WETT programs and progress. Improved partner engagement (Recommendations 6–26) will have a direct impact on how all programs will achieve WETT's desired outcomes (see also Recommendation 5).

## Employment pathways

### Recommendation 4:

We recommend that WETT sets as a strategic goal the increase of Warlpiri employment pathways and options in the WETT-funded programs.

#### Rationale

Community consultations repeatedly stressed the importance of Yapa staff in WETT-funded programs and, in many programs, the need for more Yapa staff. Yapa staff tend to be well represented in Early Childhood programs and schools; however, consultations indicated the

need for more Yapa staff in Youth Development program and Learning Centres. We also see the potential for Yapa to be employed in WETT administration and local coordination.

### Relevant data sources

The need for employment pathways for Yapa was a recurring theme in both the survey and interview data.

### Anticipated outcomes

The intention is to build capacity through employment of local Yapa staff. By explicitly including Yapa employment expectations as a contractual requirement, partners will be accountable for local employment as an outcome. This will in turn focus attention on employment pathways for Yapa.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

This links to all program areas.

## Monitoring and evaluation

### Recommendation 5:

We recommend that all new contracts for WETT-funded activities include a requirement for monitoring and evaluation, based on an overarching monitoring and evaluation framework.

### Rationale

While some programs currently report on outputs, there is little information provided about outcomes or what programs achieve against WETT goals and objectives. The development of a monitoring and evaluation framework would give guidance to program deliverers to ensure that not only deliverables are achieved, but that outcomes consistent with Warlpiri aspirations are also achieved. Writing the plan will require some specialist evaluation expertise, which should be contracted out. Part of this work would be to review a theory of change for the suite of WETT-funded activities. It is important to note here that an evaluation framework is not designed to articulate targets (though this may be part of the framework); rather, it is designed to set out the methods, processes for evaluation, costings and expected outcomes of monitoring and evaluation activities. While the framework may be aligned to contracts, it should be noted that evaluation is not about determining what works and what does not work; rather, it is about using participatory monitoring and evaluative processes and evidence to learn from activities and processes, to ensure that the best possible outcomes can be achieved. Evaluation should not be used as a 'stick' to hold partners to account. It is a tool that WETT and its partners should use to collaboratively ensure that all can learn from mistakes and successes for improvement. It may also be used as a tool for demonstrating the success of programs to attract additional funding.

### Relevant data sources

Not applicable.

## Anticipated outcomes

Evaluation will help shift the program focus to outcomes and learning, not just deliverable outputs.

# Existing programs

## Families and Children

### Recommendation 6:

We recommend that the current Early Childhood program be renamed 'Families and Children'.

### Rationale

The term 'Families and Children' recognises a) the importance of parents for learning of young children and b) reflects the strong finding from the data showing that people want to see programs that work with families, not just children, which is a current gap in service delivery. We know that strong families go together with strong children.

### Relevant data sources

Survey and interview data point to the need for family strengthening.

### Anticipated outcomes

Supports a shift in emphasis for the future development of this program area.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

Allows for stronger ties with Learning Centres and schools, and links to Recommendation 10 (Family Strengthening program). Also links back to Strategic directions (Recommendation 1).

### Outcomes

Expands potential benefit of WETT funding, particularly for young parents.

### Recommendation 7:

We recommend that WETT continues to support the Willowra Playgroup and seeks funding to continue to employ Yapa staff.

### Rationale

The Playgroup continues to play an important role and was well supported by review respondents. However, the loss of World Vision Australia's support for Yapa staff leaves a gap that needs to be bridged.

### Relevant data sources

This recommendation is based on the strong support of Willowra community members and from the WETT Advisory Committee.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

See also Recommendation 8 with regard to the change in coordinator's role.

## Anticipated outcomes

As per the existing funding agreement, but with a stronger commitment to training and employment of Yapa staff (see also Recommendation 4).

### Recommendation 8:

We recommend that part of the Willowra Playgroup coordinator's role includes promoting and supporting the coordination of the Early Childhood reference group in Willowra and assisting Yapa staff to complete qualifications.

## Rationale

This function is important for community engagement. We note that it may also be worth considering a change of name to 'Families and Children reference group'. The current role has, to a large extent, ignored training. Given that the role is full time and the Playgroup only operates for about 16 hours per week, there is plenty of time to pursue additional activities, including coordination of the local reference group.

## Relevant data sources

Community consultations strongly support the need for training and pathways to employment for Yapa staff. Reference group consultations also supported the ongoing need for reference group coordination.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

Links to strategic directions (Recommendation 1), employment priorities (Recommendation 4) and employment of Yapa staff at the Willowra Playgroup (Recommendation 7).

## Anticipated outcomes

Increased community involvement in the reference group may result in increased participation in the Playgroup, broadening awareness of early childhood needs and increased governance competence in the community. Better training outcomes will improve the sustainability options for the Playgroup and provide pathways for Yapa staff into other education roles, for example at the school.

### Recommendation 9

We recommend that WETT provides a flexible fund for Early Childhood activities in the four communities, to allow additional training, mentoring and professional learning as well as attendance at national networking events and reference group meetings (except Willowra), for staff attached to playgroups, childcare centres and other Early Childhood programs in the four communities.

## Rationale

Given the rationale for Recommendation 8, for WETT to continue to provide leadership,

influence outcomes and advocate for Early Childhood (perhaps under the new program name ‘Families and Children’), we believe that this fund will allow a better networked and supported suite of child and family services across the four communities. This is particularly important, given the disparate nature of service delivery across the communities and the need to provide continuity in the wake of WVA’s departure. It also provides access to professional learning and training for Yapa staff (noting that additional training is factored into support for Willowra staff (Recommendation 7). This should not prevent Willowra Playgroup from applying to the fund, but for Willowra the fund would exclude training, travel (currently about \$6,000) and costs associated with coordinating local reference group meetings, which are already covered within the funding agreement with Batchelor Institute.

### Relevant data sources

The importance of early childhood and training for Yapa staff was strongly affirmed in the community consultations.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

Links to strategic directions, anticipated at Recommendation 1. Links to Recommendation 26 as an opportunity to leverage additional support from the NT DoE for employment and professional learning pathways. Applications for training could be channelled through the Learning and Training Resource Broker, foreshadowed in Recommendation 22.

### Anticipated outcomes

Improved training opportunities and professional learning, better communication and networking between service delivery sites.

### Recommendation 10:

We recommend that WETT a) funds a project to find a suitable partner to establish regular family strengthening programs in the four communities, and b) funds the program (including evaluation) annually.

### Rationale

One of the strongest findings of the Review has been the need for additional support for young parents and families. Community members frequently discussed the need to have strong young parents to build strong children. The literature on family strengthening programs supports a view that strong families mean strong children. Further, the findings of the recently completed Remote Education Systems project shows the importance of parent and community involvement as a key component of success in remote schools. While there are programs, such as FaFT, in some communities, they cater for a very small proportion of all families. The new family strengthening program would be designed to complement existing family support activities. It would also create opportunities for Yapa to be involved as paid local coordinators (consistent with Recommendation 4).

### Relevant data sources

The need for a family strengthening program emerged as a strong theme from community

consultations.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

Family strengthening programs work by building social and community supports to build the capacity of parents to be stronger parents. The program would have direct links to school activities, early childhood activities and a range of support services in the community and could link to Learning Centres. Links to strategic directions (Recommendation 1) and a reframing of the Early Childhood program (Recommendation 6).

### Anticipated outcomes

This program will directly affect the parenting capacity of about 32 families per year. As an example, the kinds of outcomes for participants from the Families and Schools Together (FAST) program (Families and Schools Together, 2016) include improved social relationships, social support, parent involvement at school, family environment and parental self-efficacy. Beyond these outcomes, we anticipate that the program will build capacity through employment and additional training.

## Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools

### Recommendation 11:

We recommend that the cluster of programs currently described as the Bilingual Resource Development project, Country Visits and Elder Payments, as well as the support for Warlpiri Triangle and Jinta Jarrimi workshops through the Warlpiri-patu-kurlangu Jaru capacity-building support program be grouped under the heading of Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools.

### Rationale

This recommendation consolidates a significant investment in programs, which community members clearly value, and that might not be recognised by the NT DoE separately. The consolidation of activities under a single banner also strengthens WETT's advocacy position (see Recommendation 3). These activities are underpinned by Warlpiri philosophical positioning that sees connection to land, language, lore and law as integral to identity. They are not at odds with the Department's strategic policy aspirations for community-led schools.

### Relevant data sources

Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools activities were strongly supported, particularly in the survey data and in interviews with Yapa.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

Links to strategic directions (Recommendations 1 and 3). Includes Recommendations 12 and 13. Note also the inclusion of Yipirinya, Ti Tree and Alekarenge schools suggested at Recommendation 24.

## Anticipated outcomes

Improves ability to communicate the intent of a suite of school-based activities that have Warlpiri Language and Culture as a central theme. An important future outcome of this suite of activities will be to ensure greater respect for Warlpiri aspirations, particularly in schools.

### Recommendation 12:

We recommend that WETT continues to support all existing programs and activities listed in Recommendation 11.

## Rationale

Community members were highly supportive of all the activities under these program areas. Community members see these activities as intrinsic to Warlpiri identity and learning. We note also that without WETT support, these activities would not have a place in schools. As such, WETT's support provides sustainability for the longer term.

## Relevant data sources

Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools activities were strongly supported, particularly in the survey data and in interviews with Yapa.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

Links to strategic directions (Recommendation 1) and for the strategic communication of WETT's vision and mission (Recommendation 3). The rationale for these activities will be supported through the mapping exercise foreshadowed at Recommendation 13.

## Anticipated outcomes

Outcomes will continue as they have for the existing activities.

### Recommendation 13:

We recommend that WETT funds a project to align the Warlpiri Theme Cycle to the Achievement Standards of the Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, Australian Curriculum.

## Rationale

NT DoE respondents, while notionally recognising value in the Language and Culture activities, indicated that other priorities drive their focus in schools. The departmental focus on attendance, academic outcomes in literacy and numeracy and retention overshadowed any priority for language and culture teaching and learning. Some schools reluctantly dedicate time and resources to Warlpiri Language and Culture programs or have limited resources to support elements of the Warlpiri program, such as country visits. However, the Department is interested in meeting Australian Curriculum expectations.

The new Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, Australian Curriculum (FATSL AC) is endorsed by the Department and presents an important opportunity to promote language and culture teaching and learning. It also presents an opportunity to develop and

position the Warlpiri Theme Cycle as a guiding curriculum for the Warlpiri schools, if it is aligned with the Achievement Standards of the FATSL AC. As the Warlpiri Theme Cycle embeds country visits and bush trips in its three-year learning cycle, this proposal may also strengthen the Country Visits and Elder Payments program.

### Relevant data sources

Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools activities were strongly supported, particularly in the survey data and in interviews with Yapa.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

Links to strategic directions (Recommendation 1), particularly as it relates to the priorities of Warlpiri language and culture. Also links to Recommendation 8 and to some activities proposed for consideration in Recommendation 27.

### Anticipated outcomes

The development and alignment of the Warlpiri Theme Cycle to the Achievement Standards of the FATSL AC has the potential to leverage support from NT DoE, foster principals' and non-local teachers' recognition and reporting on Warlpiri language and culture teaching and learning and could pave the way for greater support from schools.

## Secondary support – away-from-community support

### Recommendation 14:

We recommend that CLC CDU staff improve communication to boarding schools about the availability of and application process for Boarding Support programs and raising the profile of WETT and this program.

### Rationale

The allocated resources for this program have been consistently under-utilised over the past three years. All boarding school respondents approached were unaware of the Boarding Support program. This was largely because of the churn in school staff. Many community members were also uninformed about the existence of the program. Community members generally support the idea of a fund that supports students in boarding and are increasingly sending their secondary-aged children to schools outside the Warlpiri communities. They recognise the need that many students have for additional support. However, the stories of support should be made more visible to students and parents, hence the need for improved communication about this program.

### Relevant data sources

Interview data showed a lack of awareness about this program from boarding school principals and financial officers.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

Supports Recommendation 15 and links to Recommendation 28 with regard to communication strategies.

## Anticipated outcomes

The fund will be fully utilised.

### Recommendation 15:

We recommend that WETT continues to offer all students boarding support, allowing students to access funds at and for any secondary program outside of the Warlpiri communities.

## Rationale

We believe that regardless of the rationale for Recommendation 16 (which might be seen to limit choice), it is important for parents to be able to choose which school is best for their children.

## Relevant data sources

Many people interviewed and surveyed spoke strongly about their choice of boarding school for children.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

All schools will have access to the handbook as proposed in Recommendation 17. All schools/ students will benefit from improved communication as proposed in Recommendation 14.

## Anticipated outcomes

Students will continue to benefit with support for their learning needs.

### Recommendation 16:

We recommend that WETT funds up to five preferred 'Partner Boarding Schools' to provide increased support for students to remain at these schools.

## Rationale

We note the growing trend (in part because of government policies) for remote secondary students to go to boarding schools. We also note the observations of many in communities, boarding schools and the NT DoE that many students return to community and disengage from education. Across the NT, the Department's Transition Support Unit assisted about 750 families during 2016. About one-third of the assistance was provided to families whose children had returned from an unsuccessful experience of boarding school, and another third were for children who they felt were not likely to succeed. The emerging literature on successful boarding suggests that schools need to offer greater levels of support to students than is available through Abstudy. They also need to maintain strong links with families and communities while children are away from home; however, fostering a close and committed relationship between the school and feeder communities requires support. Further, there is some evidence to suggest that students who are well supported by schools and families and who attend school with a peer group from their home community are more likely to stay at school outside of their community. These additional supports, while not a guarantee of success, are likely to improve retention. The five preferred schools would be recognised as providing both high quality educational experiences for Warlpiri students, and high levels of support both for students and parents.

## Relevant data sources

This recommendation arises from a synthesis of interview and survey data, together with relevant literature on boarding schools. It addresses in part the need for better communication between WETT and boarding schools (Recommendation 14). Further, while the literature shows little quantitative evidence for the outcomes of boarding programs, particularly for remote students, the qualitative evidence suggests that some boarding schools do better than others. The work of the NT DoE's Transition Support Unit points to the likelihood that up to two-thirds of students who go to boarding will not succeed and will disengage from education.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

The creation of a handbook as proposed in Recommendation 17 will assist schools to better understand the needs of Warlpiri students. Preferred schools, being more informed, could be expected to make good use of the funds. The investment offered here could be used as a way to leverage additional support from NT DoE as part of a co-investment package (Recommendation 26).

## Anticipated outcomes

Improved retention of students at boarding schools: We suggest that being a partner school will be connected to a performance indicator related to retention (e.g. a targeted 30% retention for a 12-month period).

Improved liaison, communication with communities: We would expect that some of the additional funds will go to Warlpiri Community Liaison (Yapa) staff who would work with the schools.

### Recommendation 17:

We recommend that WETT funds a project to create a Warlpiri Handbook for Boarding Schools.

## Rationale

As noted in the rationale for Recommendation 16, schools can do more to engage more productively with families and communities. Many schools adopt a two-way philosophy which allows for exchange of knowledge between the student's community and the boarding school. This two-way philosophy is highlighted as good practice in the emerging research literature on boarding for remote students (Benveniste et al., 2015a; Benveniste et al., 2014; Mander & Fieldhouse, 2009; Mander, 2012; Mander, 2015; O'Bryan, 2015). Part of the two-way approach can be achieved with better information from the community.

## Relevant data sources

We saw a good example of a handbook created by Nyirripi students through the Nyirripi WYDAC program to assist Kardiya workers understand the right way of working in community. A project to develop a similar handbook for boarding students could engage youth, elders and local educators. The product would then be useful for future years and would assist partner schools to work better with community members.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

We suggest this project would sit well as an additional activity to be conducted by WYDAC in conjunction with PAW Media.

## Anticipated outcomes

Improved community information to help boarding schools work better with their Warlpiri students.

Engages Warlpiri young people in an activity that will assist other young people in their learning journey.

## Secondary support – School Excursions

### Recommendation 18

We recommend that WETT continues to support the current interstate visit program as is.

## Rationale

The program is well supported by community members and offers a range of educational and life experiences for students of a range of ages. One criticism of the program is that it has not always focused enough on targeted learning. However, we note too, that schools are taking the opportunity to visit boarding schools and provide life experiences that are positive and rewarding.

## Relevant data sources

Survey data strongly support this activity.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

Refer to Recommendation 19 for our suggestion to address the learning criticism.

## Anticipated outcomes

Outcomes will continue as per current program, to be tested by evaluation (Recommendation 5).

### Recommendation 19:

We recommend that WETT provides funding for additional targeted longer interstate, or potentially intrastate visits for selected secondary-aged students to access intensive and specialised support in areas such as sport, the arts and music, intensive English, science and technology and Aboriginal cultures.

## Rationale

As noted in Recommendation 18, focused or targeted intensive learning experiences are not intended for the existing Interstate Visits program. We recognise that some Warlpiri middle-years and senior students who remain in communities will benefit from intensive learning experiences to pique and expand their aspirations for areas of study they have potential to excel in. We anticipate that the Intensive Learning Excursion program will engage up to 10 middle

years and senior students from Yuendumu and Lajamanu schools. To facilitate this activity, we suggest that it may be useful to partner with organisations such as the Aurora Project, which has specialised expertise in running intensive learning activities for young people.

### Relevant data sources

Some survey and interview data point to the need to include more focused educational activities in interstate excursions.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

This activity complements the existing School Excursions program (Recommendation 18).

### Anticipated outcomes

We expect this activity will have a profound impact on a small group of aspiring young people, who in turn may inspire the following generations to excel. Specifically, the outcomes for these students will be increased educational opportunity, stronger educational engagement towards increased retention and the development of young leaders with the ability to build specialist knowledge in their chosen area of learning.

## Youth Development

### Recommendation 20

We recommend that WETT continues to support the existing Youth Development program and scope greater collaboration with Learning Centres and potential new partners to increase the learning and engagement opportunities for young people in the four communities.

### Rationale

The partnership with WYDAC is WETT's most positive and effective. WETT's investment in the Youth Development program has yielded a suite of activities and programs, which should continue. The activities in their current form are well supported by the community and, with a few exceptions, both WYDAC and PAW Media are highly respected and valued organisations within the communities, though the spread of services needs to be more even across the four communities. While current funding is substantial, many respondents want more opportunities. We see potential for more youth and media activities arising from other recommendations as noted below.

### Relevant data sources

Survey and interview data support this recommendation.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

Links to Recommendation 17: WYDAC is suggested as a possible partner to create a Warlpiri Handbook for Boarding Schools.

Links to Recommendation 22: WYDAC and a range of other organisations in the four Warlpiri communities would be encouraged to work closely with the Learning and Training Resource Broker.

Links to Recommendation 25: WYDAC and PAW Media would be encouraged to collaborate with schools and Learning Centres to create e-learning resources and apps.

Links to Recommendation 28: PAW Media is a likely partner for the development of communication products.

## Anticipated outcomes

Outcomes remain as articulated in current funding agreements. However, subject to the development of an evaluation framework (Recommendation 5) there could be some fine-tuning to ensure that outcomes are consistent with the strategic priorities of WETT (Recommendation 1).

## Learning Centres

### Recommendation 21

We recommend that WETT builds the sustainability of Learning Centres by redesigning the model to distribute the costs and delivery of learning and training.

### Rationale

The main issue this recommendation seeks to address is the challenge of keeping the Learning Centres open. Part of the reason for the current problem (identified by many of our respondents) is that the Learning Centres depend on the presence of a qualified lecturer as the coordinator. As Yapa staff to date have not been qualified as lecturers, they have not been mentored to run or open the centres in the absence of a Kardiya coordinator. This limits Yapa employment opportunities (a priority suggested at Recommendation 4) and reduces access to Learning Centres for non-formal and informal learning.

The second issue this recommendation seeks to address is a cost-effective and responsive means to achieve the range of aims set for the Learning Centres in each community.

In a revised model, consistent with the aim of Learning Centres (to provide formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities), a non-local coordinator's focus will firstly be to work collaboratively with Yapa staff in a mentoring role to 1) open and maintain the Learning Centre, 2) investigate training needs, 3) support Yapa staff to coordinate the local reference group meetings, and 4) support local civic literacy learning needs, including community learning projects. The coordinator would not be expected to run accredited courses (though may do so and may support participants in formal or non-formal programs) but would work with the Learning and Training Resource Broker (Recommendation 22) to facilitate training brokered in.

### Relevant data sources

Interview data suggested that the current coordinator's role does not allow time to source additional funding.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

Links directly to and is dependent on Recommendation 1.

## Anticipated outcomes

Learning Centres will be less vulnerable to closure and will therefore meet community expectations of improved access to learning.

Reduced closure time will lead to increased levels of Yapa employment.

### Recommendation 22:

We recommend that WETT funds the establishment of a Learning and Training Resource Broker to work across the four communities, working collaboratively with Learning Centre staff and other organisations to broker training and identify providers and funding opportunities.

## Rationale

Learning Centre staff reported that they were overloaded with administrative requirements for accredited training and meeting the non-formal learning needs of clients. They were therefore unable to devote considerable time to mentoring and developing Yapa staff. Nor were they able to devote time to accessing additional resources and training. The wages of the coordinator were meant to be subsidised by Annual Hours of Curriculum (AHC) for formal VET courses. This has meant a strong focus on Batchelor training programs, and other outcomes unmet..

The envisaged Learning and Training Resource Broker would be based outside the Learning Centres (possibly in Alice Springs), would not necessarily be a qualified lecturer and would not deliver formal training, but would have a set of skills that enabled him/her to identify and access funding opportunities, training providers and programs that meet the learning and training needs of Warlpiri community members. We anticipate that the funding sources would include fee-for-service contracts from employers (e.g. Newmont, government departments, community stores, CLC), philanthropic sources, AHC (publicly funded training), Indigenous Advancement Strategy projects and funds available for training through the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation and other NT Government agencies. We anticipate a range of training and learning programs most suited to specific industries and domains: land management, education, sport and recreation, building and maintenance, arts and media. The range of Registered Training Organisations, with the trial of online learning programs, will be brokered in for specific learning/training and might include Batchelor Institute, Charles Darwin University, Swinburne University, RMIT and Eagle Training (see Appendix 2). The Learning and Training Resource Broker will also investigate project-based learning opportunities, supporting projects such as community literacy, bike repair, arts and cultural and linguistic documentation projects.

We anticipate that in the first year of the revised model, this role would need to be fully underwritten by WETT, but in subsequent years the role should fully or partly subsidise itself. The Learning and Training Resource Broker would logically be employed by the same organisation that manages all Learning Centres. We realise that in 2017, Learning Centres are managed by two organisations, but our assumption is that on conclusion of the WYDAC pilot at Yuendumu, the preferred operation of all centres is by one organisation.

## Relevant data sources

Workshop data together with historical data suggest that sustainability is an important issue to be addressed.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

Links directly to and complements Recommendation 21.

## Anticipated outcomes

The outcomes of this role will include:

- Increased options for training and learning in all Learning Centres to meet the needs and aspirations of Warlpiri adults and youth
- Improved access to a wider variety of additional funding sources beyond AHC and fee-for-service delivery, including philanthropic sources, targeted grant programs, training programs for Aboriginal people funded by the NT Government and free workshops such as those offered by the NT Government's Business October workshops
- Improved coordination of community-based training needs, for example coordinating the shared training needs of schools, clinics, CDP, councils and other organisations.

## New programs

### University transition support

#### Recommendation 23:

We recommend that WETT establishes a University Transition Support Fund to support Warlpiri students to access and complete their preferred higher education courses.

#### Rationale

Given the increasing trends of access to and attainment of educational opportunities, albeit nascent in the Warlpiri communities at this point, we anticipate that there will be a small but growing number of young people who aspire to go on to university. For some, the additional costs associated with travel to a university and support required while at university may act as a barrier. Abstudy and scholarships will help, but we know that for some families access to higher education requires additional support to navigate the transition process. We envisage this fund being used for both the financial support and the transition support (e.g. help with enrolment, accessing appropriate accommodation, pre-enrolment orientation). The fund could support young people's direct access to universities from Year 12, but may also support alternative pathways, for example Batchelor Institute's Preparation for Tertiary Success program.

There are existing scholarship programs such as the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation, but so far these programs have not been accessible to Warlpiri young people.

#### Relevant data sources

Only a small number of respondents in interviews suggested support for university transition. However, the increasing trend (identified in literature) of Year 12 completions coupled with longer exposure to boarding school education means that aspirations for university study are likely to increase in coming years.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

This fund could be used in conjunction with our recommendation for partner boarding schools (Recommendation 16), which will be used to support the aspirations and higher education pathways for academically oriented students.

## Anticipated outcomes

This fund will increase opportunity for students who aspire to higher education studies.

## Links to other schools

### Recommendation 24:

We recommend that WETT re-establishes links with Yipirinya, Ti Tree and Alekarenge schools to offer resources for the Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools program (Recommendation 11), as part of an outreach strategy to Warlpiri living outside of the four communities.

## Rationale

Some respondents from inside and outside the four communities indicated some dissatisfaction about the availability of WETT resources to Warlpiri children outside of the four communities. While noting this dissatisfaction, we recognise the complexity of reaching the range of people with Warlpiri heritage outside of the four communities and are not sure what the uptake level of these programs would be.

## Relevant data sources

Some interviews with Warlpiri outside the four communities expressed some disquiet about the exclusion of support for Warlpiri Language and Culture programs outside the four communities.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

Consideration of this recommendation may be determined by the Strategic directions review anticipated in Recommendation 1. The recommendation encompasses all activities in the Warlpiri Language and Culture in Schools program (see Recommendations 12 and 13) and links to Recommendation 21.

## Anticipated outcomes

Increased access to WETT-funded programs to Warlpiri students outside the four communities.

## E-resources

### Recommendation 25:

We recommend that WETT funds the establishment of a Warlpiri E-resource program to create apps and e-learning resources for all ages.

## Rationale

The aim of this program is to create apps for Warlpiri language and culture and literacy teaching,

enabling relevant learning for all ages. The use of technology in learning was well supported by many respondents to the Review.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are increasingly being used for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language maintenance and revitalisation purposes across Australia. As yet there are no apps that support this purpose for Warlpiri language and culture. The apps could also support learning around on-country activities (e.g. bush trips, ranger work, country visits) for geospatial purposes and to connect places to Warlpiri stories. We envisage that the purpose and content for apps would come from community participation in associated activities. The apps would be built on multiple platforms (e.g. not just on an iOS platform) to maximise their uptake and application for community members.

### Relevant data sources

There was considerable support for the development of e-resources in both interview and survey data.

### Links to programs and other recommendations

This recommendation links to the Warlpiri Language and Culture program (Recommendation 11), the Youth Development program (Recommendation 20) and the Learning Centre program (Recommendation 21). The inclusion of this recommendation should be affirmed by the Strategic directions review anticipated at Recommendation 1.

### Anticipated outcomes

Increased access to learning through ICTs.

Community engagement and input through the development of apps.

The program should be subject to evaluation (Recommendation 5).

## Co-investment with the Northern Territory Department of Education

### Recommendation 26.

We recommend that WETT presents a co-investment package to the NT DoE to advance Warlpiri interests where there is mutual benefit and to leverage off existing and new investments being implemented by the Department, including the Transition Support Unit, the implementation of an Employment Pathways Curriculum Framework and the increased investment in the schools' workforce.

### Rationale

The NT DoE has invested heavily in its Indigenous Education Strategy and is beginning to operationalise many elements of its plan. However, finite resources mean that it is likely that smaller communities will continue to miss out on some of the opportunities created. The Department is arguably one of WETT's most strategic partners, yet it is the one that has been problematic, with variable or minimal support offered to support Warlpiri aspirations for

language and culture (as noted in the rationale for Recommendation 13). WETT, is well placed to offer a package of additional resources to influence and strengthen the WETT-NT DoE partnership (see Recommendation 3). Underpinning this recommendation is an expectation that partners will employ more Warlpiri staff (Recommendation 4). Further, the lack of secondary education options, particularly in Nyirrpi and Willowra, means that the NT DoE is potentially not fulfilling its obligations under the Northern Territory Education Act 2015 Section 15 (1)b. Partly in response to this, NT DoE has developed an Employment Pathways Curriculum Framework for application in remote communities, particularly for students who would otherwise attend a middle school or high school.

Notwithstanding the legislated role of the Minister and the Department to provide education, it still may be difficult to garner resources required for quality secondary education alternatives in the smaller communities. With this possible result in mind, the Review team discussed the possibilities of working with Youth Plus to run secondary programs in Nyirrpi and Willowra. Youth Plus has run St Joseph's Alice Springs Flexible Learning Centre since 2012 and manages schools for marginalised young people in several locations around Australia. The response from Youth Plus was favourable, and they would welcome a discussion with WETT, should the need arise.

As noted during the WETT Advisory Committee meeting with the Minister for Education on 29 March 2017, the Department is actively pursuing 'community-led' schools. While at one level this means strengthening (or in many cases establishing) school councils, it does not preclude the possibility of establishing regional (in this case Warlpiri) advisory groups where there are common interests. For WETT, the advocacy role foreshadowed in Recommendation 3 means that such a body could oversee the overarching concerns for Warlpiri language and culture in schools. This might ensure a consistent approach to country visits, use of language resources, employment of linguists and other issues where there are shared Warlpiri aspirations. The Minister signalled to the Committee that she was open to a regional board approach.

We envisage several potential employment opportunities to support training and education offered by the NT DoE. They include:

- Apprentices and trainees in schools to offer pathways into education support and teaching or other opportunities in other industries (such as health workers and rangers)
- Community liaison staff to support the Transition Support Unit's efforts to work with families
- Assistant teachers to support the implementation of the Employment Pathways Curriculum Framework so that middle years learning opportunities are increased, particularly in the small communities.
- Early childhood staff to ensure that all children have access to services.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

Links to Recommendation 3 (communicating vision to partners) and supported by Recommendation 1. Also supports Recommendation 4 (employment pathways for Yapa).

## Relevant data sources

Interview data suggest that the NT DoE is keen to partner with WETT to achieve its own ends (in relation to attendance, enrolment, boarding and retention). Community members, however, want

the Department to increase secondary options in the small communities. The Review provides evidence that can be presented to the Department to argue better for the needs of Warlpiri communities.

## Anticipated outcomes

We would expect to see more local employment options in and through schools and improved information flow between the Department and the communities. We also expect greater respect for Warlpiri aspirations as a result of the advocacy work that this recommendation requires.

## Recommended for further exploration

The following recommendation points to possible directions worth exploring by WETT. At this stage we are not prepared to fully support the ideas, but note that in many cases the ideas have been generated from respondents to the Review. Before proceeding we propose they be discussed by the WETT Advisory Committee.

### Recommendation 27:

We recommend, that WETT explores options to a) expand support to Warlpiri in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Palmerston, and b) provide support to Tangentyere Council's Warlpiri Learning Centre in Alice Springs (which now has \$300,000 funding and is due to be operational by end of the year).

### Rationale

The above options have some support from the consultations, but are perhaps peripheral to the focus on Warlpiri communities. The nature of these options is such that they require greater exploration, beyond the scope of the Review, that could be undertaken by the Implementation Officer. However, the options will require careful consideration by the WETT Advisory Committee.

We have recommended that links to schools in other communities be re-established (Recommendation 24), but there is a historical precedent for those actions.

## Governance

### Recommendation 28:

We recommend that WETT better communicates its activities to the communities it works in and the organisations and stakeholders it partners with.

### Rationale

One of the key findings coming from stakeholder interviews and the community surveys relates to a lack of awareness about some programs. Community members were keen to know about what was available. At times some people were unaware of how the WETT Advisory Committee worked or how it distributed funds.

## Relevant data sources

Surveys and stakeholder interviews point to lack of awareness within communities and among partners.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

Actions under this recommendation link directly to Strategic directions proposed in Recommendation 1 and the development of a communication strategy (Recommendation 3).

## Anticipated outcomes

Improved community and partner awareness about WETT.

### Recommendation 29:

We recommend that the WETT Advisory Committee comprise 16 members, and that a quorum be a minimum of 10.

## Rationale

Many of the current members are founding members and have contributed to the committee for a decade. A new process is needed to ensure sustainability and renewal of the Committee into the future, and to ensure adequate community representation. The recommendation here is for a continuation of the WETT Advisory Committee structure as is, with new members to increase the representation to an average of four members from each community (we suggest an average as this may vary depending on circumstances). Current committee should remain and only new members be elected. Partners should be actively encouraged to nominate their staff to this committee.

This structure does not preclude the possibility of invited guests, for example from partner organisations. Partner organisations such as WYDAC, PAW Media and WETT-supported programs such as Early Childhood should be actively encouraged to nominate staff and/or committee members to the WETT Advisory Committee.

## Relevant data sources

This recommendation is guided by outcomes of workshops conducted with the WETT Advisory Committee and the CLC Steering Committee through 2016 and early 2017.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

The structure proposed in this recommendation links directly to a short-term process proposed in Recommendation 30 and a longer term process outlined in Recommendation 31.

## Anticipated outcomes

Renewal and development of the Committee in the medium term.

### Recommendation 30:

We recommend that current vacancies for Advisory Committee positions (to make up 16 members) be filled by a process of nomination and election in 2018–2019. After the first elections, all positions will come up for election every three years.

## Rationale

This recommendation provides a manageable process for building the Committee without disrupting current members and for deliberations over and implementation of the Review recommendations before significant changes to election processes are made.

## Relevant data sources

This recommendation is guided by outcomes of workshops conducted with the WETT Advisory Committee through 2016.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

This recommendation assumes a structure proposed in Recommendation 29.

## Anticipated outcomes

Renewal and development of the WETT Advisory Committee in the medium term.

### Recommendation 31:

We recommend that proxies for all Advisory Committee members be formally identified and recognised with a clearly defined role.

## Rationale

Proxies are used by the Advisory Committee to replace members as needed, but there is no formal register, process or position description for them. If proxies undergo governance training and induction, as proposed in Recommendation 32, they would see their potential for longer term involvement and be a ready pool of potential qualified election candidate, thereby contributing to the sustainability of the Committee.

## Relevant data sources

This recommendation is guided by outcomes of workshops conducted with the WETT Advisory Committee through 2016 and 2017.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

The recommendation follows on from the establishment of strategic directions (Recommendation 1), improved communication about WETT to its stakeholders (Recommendation 28) and the strengthening of the Committee structure (Recommendation 29). Training for proxies is suggested at Recommendation 32.

## Anticipated outcomes

Renewal and development of the Committee in the long term.

### Recommendation 32:

We recommend that a governance training schedule for all WETT Advisory Committee members and proxies be developed, including induction processes for new members and proxies.

## Rationale

While we do not question the competence of the current WETT Advisory Committee, as new members join and as proxies take on a recognised role, it will be important for all members and proxies to participate in governance training appropriate for the task. New members will require induction to the WETT Advisory Committee, and this can be part of governance training.

## Relevant data sources

This recommendation emerged from the March 2017 workshop.

## Links to programs and other recommendations

This recommendation supports Recommendations 29, 30 and 31.

## Anticipated outcomes

Improved awareness and confidence in the roles of all Advisory Committee members and proxies.



| WETT Advisory Committee and Kurra WETT Director's Strategic Planning Meeting, Alice Springs 2016 (source CLC)



| Shirley Turner, Thailand Excursion 2016, Secondary School Support Program (source Kardinia College)



Ingapa (water) excursion, Willowra, 2011 (source Willowra School)



## Appendix 2: Programs, projects and partners to consider

### Early Childhood

Project title: Growing Up Children in Two Worlds

Raising Children in Two Worlds - recognising and building on strengths in two remote Aboriginal communities

<http://www.cdu.edu.au/health-wellbeing/growing-up-children-in-two-worlds>

<http://www.yalu.cdu.edu/healthResources/earlychildhood.html>

From the website:

*Rapid and pervasive changes in remote Aboriginal communities present particular challenges to families in bringing up their children. Indigenous early-child development is attracting considerable government investment to implement programs that are generally based on evidence from other populations that may have limited relevance for the target groups. This project will engage Aboriginal people in a collaborative research process to identify and build on their strengths to address the challenges they face in bringing up their children 'in two worlds'. This qualitative research project will provide the opportunity for Aboriginal residents of two remote communities - one in the Top End of the NT and one in Central Australia - to voice their perspectives and concerns, and share their knowledge, related to the development of their children. This project is a response to concerns expressed by Yolŋu that can be viewed at the Yalu website [link above].*

Initially, this project began on small grants and now has funding from the Lowitja Institute, in a partnership between Charles Darwin University and SNAICC.

Project leader Anne Lowell is interested in connecting the Yolgnu participants in this project with WETT and Warlpiri Early Childhood stakeholders. Anne.Lowell@cdu.edu.au

## Warlpiri language and culture in schools – E Resources

First Languages Australia have an excellent report ‘Angkety map Digital resource report’, published in 2014. It is a must read. <http://languageresources.com.au/files/fla-angkety-map.pdf>

Most Apps developed to date are for language revitalisation programs, rather than first language enrichment programs. However, there is some cross over as apps designed for language learning can be helpful for literacy learning.

The list below is not conclusive, it is limited to apps produced for Australian languages. There are a fascinating range created by and for Indigenous people worldwide.

One exception included here is Singuistics – an Inuit app for teaching and learning songs. <http://pinnguaq.com/singuistics/>

Ryan Oliver from pinnguaq is happy to talk about Warlpiri educators using this app.

Contact [ryan@pinnguaq.com](mailto:ryan@pinnguaq.com)



| Willowra School Culture Day (Source Willowra School)

Name	Purpose	Platform	Producer	Address
Western Arrarnta Plants	Word learning, ecological knowledge	I - app	Big fat studios	<a href="http://www.italkstudios.com.au/">http://www.italkstudios.com.au/</a> See this site for various apps
Skin name game - Western Arrarnta	Word learning, cultural knowledge	I - app	Big fat studios	<a href="http://www.italkstudios.com.au/">http://www.italkstudios.com.au/</a> See this site for various apps
Bird apps - Central Australia	Word and cultural knowledge	Cross platform	Margaret Carew, Batchelor Institute	<a href="https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/the-p-anmatyerr-birds/id1137816232?mt=8">https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/the-p-anmatyerr-birds/id1137816232?mt=8</a>
Barnjarla Aboriginal Dictionary	Dictionary - word, spelling, translation learning	Cross platform	See address	Cheyne Halloran and <a href="https://regenr8.org/language-revitalisation/apps/barnjarla-dictionary/">https://regenr8.org/language-revitalisation/apps/barnjarla-dictionary/</a> See this site for various dictionaries created on the iconic platform
Victorian Aboriginal Corporation Languages - talking story book series	Talking and interactive books	I - app	Kiwa Digital - Digital Story Software	<a href="https://www.kiwadigital.com/">https://www.kiwadigital.com/</a> <a href="https://itunes.apple.com/us/artist/victorian-aboriginal-corporation/id928978621">https://itunes.apple.com/us/artist/victorian-aboriginal-corporation/id928978621</a> (custom made and poss. costly)
NLanguages Anindilyakwa	Interactive flashcards	Cross platform	Disparity Games, NT Library	<a href="https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/ntlanguages-anindilyakwa/id585478474?mt=8">https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/ntlanguages-anindilyakwa/id585478474?mt=8</a>
Miriwoong Dictionary	Words, phrases, audio, games, vocabulary by topics.	Cross platform		<a href="https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.org.mirima.miriwoong.mobile&amp;hl=en">https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.org.mirima.miriwoong.mobile&amp;hl=en</a>



Valerie Patterson reading Warlpiri books with a student  
(Source BRDU)

Empty Shells			
Miroma	Dictionary making and display software	Cross platform	<a href="http://www.miromaa.org.au/miromaa/ios-apps.html">http://www.miromaa.org.au/miromaa/ios-apps.html</a>
Italk studio	Digital stories, games	I - app	<a href="http://www.italkstudios.com.au/apps/">http://www.italkstudios.com.au/apps/</a>
Kiwa	Digital stories +	I - app	<a href="https://www.kiwadigital.com/">https://www.kiwadigital.com/</a>
Jila	Games based apps	Cross platform	<a href="http://jilaframework.github.io/">http://jilaframework.github.io/</a>
Creative Book Builder	Digital stories	Cross platform	<a href="http://www.appsinclass.com/creative-book-builder.html">http://www.appsinclass.com/creative-book-builder.html</a>
ScribJob	Digital stories	Cross platform	<a href="http://www.scribjab.com/en/about/tour.html">http://www.scribjab.com/en/about/tour.html</a>
Memrise	Flashcard word, phrase, spelling learning	Cross platform	<a href="https://www.memrise.com/app/">https://www.memrise.com/app/</a> See also <a href="https://www.memrise.com/course/1201862/warumungu/">https://www.memrise.com/course/1201862/warumungu/</a> DIY Duolingo
aikuma	Record and share	?	<a href="https://play.google.com/store/search?q=aikuma">https://play.google.com/store/search?q=aikuma</a>

## Development of the Warlpiri Theme Cycle

The Warlpiri Theme Cycle has been in ongoing development and use by Warlpiri educators in the bilingual education programs since the 1980s (Disbray & Martin, 2017). It is a curriculum framework document, with a range of layer 2 syllabus and teaching materials. Currently these are not united, elaborated or mapped to the NT and national documents. The WETT-funded database ‘Warlpiri Pina-jarrinjaku’, created in 2013, has sought to pull an extensive set of materials together in one electronic space. The project recommended in the Review consolidates the work so far in a comprehensive document, which will also map Warlpiri learning outcomes to the Australian Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages and the aligned Northern Territory Curriculum Framework Indigenous Language and Culture.

The following specialists have offered external advice and collaborative development, through in-kind support (no charge):

Angela Scarino, who is Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics, Director of the Research Centre for Languages and Cultures at University of South Australia, author of the ACARA Languages Shaping Paper and co-developer of the ACARA Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages. [angela.scarino@unisa.edu.au](mailto:angela.scarino@unisa.edu.au)

Mary Laughren, former Warlpiri program Linguist. [mary.laughren@bigpond.com](mailto:mary.laughren@bigpond.com)

Samantha Disbray, former bilingual program linguist, with the Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Languages: [Samantha.disbray@anu.edu.au](mailto:Samantha.disbray@anu.edu.au)

## Secondary Support

Youth Plus has run St Joseph's Alice Springs Flexible Learning Centre since 2012 and manages schools for marginalised young people in several locations around Australia. The response from Youth Plus was favourable and they would welcome a discussion with WETT, should the need arise. <http://www.youthplus.edu.au/schools-services-details/youth-schools-network/flexible-learning-centre-alice-springs/alice-springs-flexible-learning-centre.html>

## School excursions

Sydney Story Factory – The Sydney Story Factory has experience with remote students. Until December 2016 it collaborated with the National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy (NASCA) and worked with remote school groups, including groups from Central Australia. NASCA's program funded and supported excursion groups to take part in a range of activities in Sydney and environs and, at the end of the trip, students attended a two-day workshop at the story factory to document their excursion.

From the website (<http://www.sydneystoryfactory.org.au/>)

*We run free creative writing and storytelling workshops for young people aged 7 to 17, particularly those from marginalised backgrounds. Under the guidance of our expert storytelling team, young people work with volunteer tutors to write stories of all kinds, which we publish in as many ways as we can. Young people leave with the skills and confidence essential for future success.*

Craig New (Mission Control and Volunteer Manager, [Craig@sydneystoryfactory.org.au](mailto:Craig@sydneystoryfactory.org.au)) and Richard Short (Storyteller-In-Chief, 02 9699 6970, [richard@sydneystoryfactory.org.au](mailto:richard@sydneystoryfactory.org.au)) are open to discussing a future program with Warlpiri schools.

## Youth programs

Some of the programs discussed under Learning Centres are relevant to Youth programs.

## Learning Centres – Adult learning opportunities

### Yes, I Can!

The Yes, I Can! program is an adult literacy program originally developed in Cuba that aims to develop adult literacy on a national level. In Australia, it has been successfully used to address low English literacy levels in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, particularly in the New South Wales communities of Brewarrina, Enngonia and Bourke \* <https://www.lflf.org.au/about-cms5>). Local community members were trained to deliver the program, and this delivery resulted in some vital social outcomes..

The program involves three phases: Socialisation and Mobilisation – aimed at engaging whole community involvement and participation; 64 Basic Literacy Lessons; Post Literacy – the program then works to provide new opportunities for graduates of the program, such as work possibilities.

There is a rolling approach used where Phase 1 is repeated once the first intake of students are undertaking Phase 2. Basic Literacy Lessons are provided on DVDs, which the local coordinator plays to the class, who then do the activities. It is therefore easy to use. The outcomes are reported as good, but further work is needed. Numbers – retention percentage of over 70% – was good, but the small sample means that this may not be a reliable figure.

An ethics of care and pedagogy of contingency are drawn on, providing social outcomes such as moves towards community healing; the development of a community of practice; the opportunity for intergenerational literacy development; individual and community capacity-building; individual participation and engagement in the community and with services; increased confidence; a developing sense of purpose and recreated identity. The program promotes its social outcomes, and while these are significant and vital in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, similar social outcomes have been achieved in other projects, such as using digital storying and the accompanying development of technology skills.

The Review was asked to consider this program for the Warlpiri context. It finds that the experience of the program and its delivery model is not suitable. It has not operated in English as an Additional Language contexts. Its workshop delivery is short and intensive. It requires ‘whole of community’ participation. These factors present serious restrictions on delivery in the Warlpiri context. The cost of delivery would be high, as would the risk of the program not meeting the needs of the Warlpiri context.

### Language, literacy and numeracy in the Barkly

Manivannan Naidu, Coordinator Learning and Development at Barkly Shire in Tennant Creek, has been working with Central Desert Training and has developed a set of practices and resources to support staff in three Barkly communities in workplace language, literacy and numeracy development for pre-certificate learning. These involve learning resources and checklists for specific workplace tasks. The program he and Kailas Kerr from Central Desert Training developed is innovative and tailored. Currently Central Desert Training is paid \$70,000 per year for delivery in three communities.

Unfortunately, the training is pre-certificate and does not attract funding; however, Barkly Shire finds that it is more worthwhile than available certificate training and its delivery modes more suited to the Barkly context.

Mani is prepared to share the materials with others. [manivannan.naidu@barkly.nt.gov.au](mailto:manivannan.naidu@barkly.nt.gov.au)

### Central Desert Training

Central Desert Training is a local training provider, based in Alice Springs. It is highly regarded and offers a range of accredited and non-accredited learning programs. It has been engaged by the CLC to provide training to Rangers at Yuendumu.

### Preparation for Tertiary Success, Batchelor Institute

This course is well regarded and well established. It is relatively high level, equivalent to senior secondary level. It may be a good program for young adults with some success in secondary education seeking a second chance. It is offered as block release in Alice Springs, but a critical mass of Warlpiri participants could be a good way to sustain a cohort and could make viable the

engagement of a part-time tutor in one or more Learning Centres, funded through the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS) program.

From the website: <http://go.batchelor.edu.au/pts>

*This free university preparation program is an innovative and engaging course for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The program is designed to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence you need to succeed at university. It is delivered both in Alice Springs and in Darwin.*

*While it is a pathway into university, it is more than just learning the required academic skills. Students also uncover the necessary dimensions of successful adult learning – such as confidence, resilience and the ability to learn new things. Students and staff bring together their Indigenous and academic knowledge systems to develop a strong ‘Both-ways’ learning identity.*

*All Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who are 18 years or older are eligible to apply. The PTS course is most suitable for people who have completed at least Year 10 at school or a Certificate III qualification.*

## indigiMOB

indigiMOB is a digital literacy development project funded by Telstra and administered and operated by Indigenous Remote Communications Association (IRCA) in central Australia. After a successful pilot in 2016 in Alice Springs and Arlparra, the program is being implemented in Yuendumu and Yuelamu, in partnership with PAW Media and IRCA in 2017. The selection of communities is not dependent on mobile coverage, and discussion with PAW Media about the program could potentially see it expanded to the other Warlpiri communities.

From the website: <https://www.irca.net.au/indigimob>

*The inDigiMOB vision is that all Australians have equitable and affordable access to appropriate communications services and skills that enable them to achieve their full capability and aspiration. inDigiMOB is about improving digital inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in remote Northern Territory. It does this by making available a flexible suite of resources that communities and organisations can take advantage of, according to their diverse needs and contexts.*

*These resources include technical, training and infrastructure support. They aim to establish local digital mentors; improve digital literacy through workshops and training; support connectivity solutions; provide technical advice; and develop appropriate and relevant learning tools. inDigiMOB emphasises informal, peer-to-peer learning that values the experiences and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Learning is project based, inclusive, responsive to community wishes, and, where relevant, builds on existing projects.*

*In its 2016 pilot year, inDigiMOB operated in Arlparra and Alice Springs town camps. 2016 Formative Program Evaluation Report [link on website].*

indigiMOB is gradually extending its digital inclusion program to a further eight additional remote Northern Territory communities throughout 2017.

## Swinburne University of Technology

Swinburne University of Technology promotes a large range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community partnerships. Programs operating in remote communities in the NT in which they are involved to varying extents are:

The Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation (ALPA) – this financially independent program supports the development of enterprise to promote local economies, Aboriginal business opportunities and Aboriginal culture. It is designed to give back to the communities it is established within. ALPA operates in 27 locations in NT and Queensland. Part of this program is educational.

Council for Aboriginal Alcohol Program Services, Northern Territory has a Memorandum of Understanding with Swinburne and a community based program on drug and alcohol misuse, rehabilitation and homelessness operates through this.

Industry Skills Advisory Council – the council develops and reviews national training packages and works in all areas of education around training requirements and skill shortages. This service does not have an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or remote focus but may represent opportunities for the development of training opportunities which could be explored.

Indigenous Futures Collaboration Project – Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP) funded project to increase successful participation in the areas of education, media and health. They use a digital format that is contextually adjusted and consider cultural aspects of learning. Mention is made of using local support workers to remove the barriers that are present for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educational participation so that learning can be sustained.

Other VET courses are also mentioned through this program, including Certificates III and IV in Screen and Media – these two courses were developed in partnership with Goolarri Media Inc. Broome and the resources are contextualised and are very high quality; other courses mentioned are Certificate II in Creative Industries (Media), Certificate II in Community Services, Certificate III in Individual Support and Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs.

Swinburne also developed a Recognition and Gap Training model for the delivery of the CHC40213 Certificate IV in Education Support that has been highly successful in three pilot locations in Queensland, including remote (Thursday Island). This model is targeted at Education Support Workers employed in any level of education, including early childhood settings. The majority of the learning activities and assessment relate to the duties and tasks within their work roles. It suits people who cannot afford to study full time, as well as applied learners who need to see the relevance to what they do in their job.

The trade training has moved from the Doors to Jobs program, where they delivered a set of competencies, to the Growing Employment in Remote Northern Territory Communities program. It delivers the Certificate IV in remote area building and maintenance. This course is not online and is delivered by Swinburne trainers in training blocks. The course builds competencies by students working on upgrading community assets. It has had some good employment outcomes.

Jill Slater, Manager, HEPPP Indigenous Futures Project is happy to be a contact person.

Phone: (03) 9726 1726, Mobile: 0410 569 329, Email: [jslater@swin.edu.au](mailto:jslater@swin.edu.au).

## Matrix on Board

Matrix on Board is a financial consulting organisation and registered training provider. According to their website, they deliver

*training to Australian non-profit organisations. We work closely with non-profit organisations nation -wide, to provide innovative community sector and financial literacy training.*

They offer non-accredited financial literacy training and Certificates II and III in Community Services. <https://mobtraining.com.au/>

According to a 2015 Evaluation,

*Matrix on Board ('Matrix') operates a Registered Training Organisation ('RTO') delivering nationally accredited training, including a program of capacity building, professional development and support for the Money Management sector ('MMS') in Australia. The aim of this program is to develop a qualified Money Management workforce and sustainable service providers, in order to adequately support clients and their families to achieve financial independence. Facilitated through the Financial Management Resource Support Unit ('FMRSU') since 2009, on average 151 Money Management workers from 29 service providers in Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland have participated each year, in this program. A substantial proportion of these workers are Indigenous, and this workforce has delivered Money Management support to more than 33,000 Indigenous clients. The FMRSU training follows a 'Workforce Development' model which is committed to helping people achieve their learning goals in a fun and supportive learning environment*

See Godinho, V. (2015). Evaluation Report for Financial Management Resource Support Unit, Matrix on Board. Prepared for Financial Resilience Australia PTY LTD.

<http://mobtraining.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/FMRSU-Evaluation-Report-30-June-2015-2.pdf>

## Julie Bailey

Julie Bailey is a retired Professor of Film and Media. She coordinates a network of volunteers to support diverse learning groups in remote NT. She works with a small number of schools and with Barkly Shire. While some volunteers, including Julie, volunteer on site, Julie also coordinates skype-in tutors. This could be an interesting opportunity for the Warlpiri Learning Centres. Julie is looking for an institution such as a University or TAFE at which to base a program; however, it currently remains a loose network of volunteers. Ros Bauer from WYDAC is in correspondence with Julie.

Julie Bailey [jjbailey@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jjbailey@optusnet.com.au)



| Yuendumu School culture day (source Yuendumu School)

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