

Binarri-binyja Yarrowoo

Empowered Communities East Kimberley

NOTE FROM THE CEO

In August 2021, Empowered Communities East Kimberley passed a significant milestone. Working together with the national Indigenous Australians Agency through our joint decision-making initiative, we have now influenced over \$20m of Commonwealth investment into Aboriginal wellbeing in the East Kimberley.

Giving voice to community priorities and strengthening the role of community-controlled organisations in delivering programs for Aboriginal programs is an essential part of

shaping the future of Aboriginal development in the region. All part of BBY's vision for:

Enduring and effective Aboriginal-led reform, which transfers power and responsibility to Aboriginal people and creates opportunity for the social, cultural and economic development of our children and families.

A big shout out to all of you across the region working tirelessly to increase the rate of Covid 19 vaccination amongst Kimberley Aboriginal people. 'We care for

children, old people and vulnerable people' is one of the Empowered Communities East Kimberley social norms. What better way to live it than by encouraging your family, friends and workmates to go out and get vaccinated.

Thanks for all that you do. We look forward to seeing you all at the BBY AGM in November.

~ Christy Hawker



BBY Community Engagement Leader, Natasha Storey and KALACC Women's Deputy Chair - BBY Board Director, Merle Carter at the Punturr Punturr Festival

PUTTING CULTURE AT THE CENTRE OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

BBY staff attended the Punturr Punturr Festival 2021, held at Port Smith Birds Park in the West Kimberley, with lots of activities lined up, including the launch of the Kimberley Aboriginal Women's Strategic Plan for Law & Culture

The Womens Strategic Plan was presented on the first day of the festival. It outlines the broader issues impacting Kimberley Aboriginal women and how the community can take the next steps on a local level to bring positive change.

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Save the Date

Local Management Committee Meetings

- Kununurra - Tuesday, 14 Decemeber
- Wyndham - Wednesday, 8 December
- Halls Creek - Tuesday, 19 October

Sector Development

- Data Sovereignty Webinar 24 November 2021
- Annual General Meeting
- 10 November 2021

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Speaking at the gathering, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar AO urged women to protect, support and revive Aboriginal cultural practices so that they can be passed on to younger generations.

According to KALACC, the Plan's purpose is to unite and encourage Aboriginal women to practice, maintain, teach and celebrate their law and culture on country and actively pass on their knowledge to the next generation.

The Plan was presented to the group for discussion in preparation for presentation to the Minister for Indigenous Australians, Hon Ken Wyatt.

The Kimberley Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) holds its regional cultural festival on-country every three years in the Kimberley, and the event is arguably one of the most significant Aboriginal festivals of culture in the Kimberley, attracting up to 3000 people over a few days, the event is dedicated to promoting traditional Aboriginal culture.

Unfortunately, the 2021 September Festival was cancelled after the launch as the site needed to be evacuated due

to nearby bushfires. A new date for the festival will be announced in due course.

BBY greatly appreciates the beautiful smoking ceremony and Welcome To Country ceremony from the Karajarri people on whose land we were meeting.



TOWARDS CLIMATE CULTURE & BUSH KNOWLEDGE

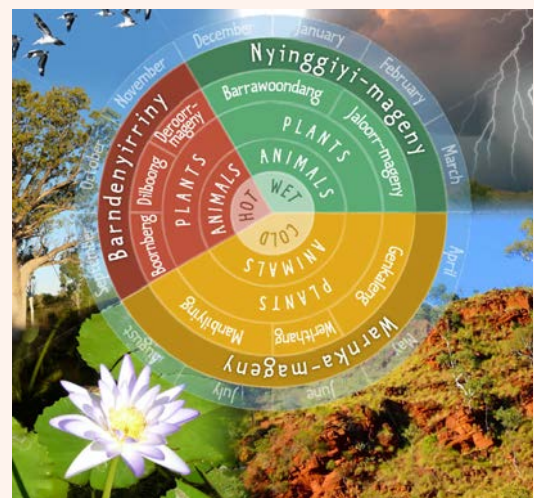
BARNDENYIRRINY SEASON

September is the beginning of a new season called Barndenyiriny, according to the Mirriwoong Seasonal Calendar, and stretches for only three months (Sept - Nov). This is a hot season with an average daily high temperature above 36°C.

The Barndenyiriny season goes through three stages: **Boornbeng** (warm north winds blow across the region, the temperature starts rising, **Dilboong** (the land dries out and become dusty, and **Deroorr-mageny** (south-west winds blows across the land leading to thunderstorms).

Even though it's a hot season, there's still plenty of bush food around. We see an abundance of nutritious fruit plants like bush melons (Garelng) and bush oranges (Joogoorroong). This is also a perfect time to fish big barramundi's (Jaliwang). It is a much sought after food source for the Miriwoong people.

To find out more about the Miriwoong Seasonal Calendar, please visit <http://mirima.org.au/seasonal-calendar-barndenyiriny/> or contact Mirima Dawang Woollab-gerring Language and Culture Centre.



Miriwoong Seasonal Calendar

Source: Mirima Dawang Woollab-gerring Language and Culture Centre



GROWING UP STRONG KIDS

KNX EARLY YEARS HUB TAKES MOMENTUM

On 26 July, Early Years' service providers in Kununurra came together to reset and strengthen relationships at an Early Years Hub Workshop facilitated by BBY. **The workshop aimed at identifying key actions the group could work on together to improve outcomes for children 0-7 years.**

Organisations who attended the meeting were: Kununurra Waringarri Aboriginal Corporation,

Wunan Foundation Inc and Mirima Dawang Woortlabgering Language and Culture Centre (MDWg).

With a renewed commitment to work together, member organisations discussed sector and community matters. **The group identified a list of key actions that needs urgent attention to help stem challenges facing the sector.** These include providing tailored courses/workshops for Early Years staff and to

improve communication between service providers and the community, to mention a few.

However, a prioritisation activity was undertaken, and one action was chosen to begin immediately. **The group agreed to hold collaborative community events promoting Early Years services to local Aboriginal families.** The group believes organising joint events will help strengthen sector partnerships and improve

communication with the Aboriginal community.

The workshop follows BBY's Early Years Collective Impact Initiative that seeks to improve services in East Kimberley and make sure member organisations are working together to support parents and kids.

To learn more about our Early Years Hub project please contact Alison at 0891692272



JOINT DECISION MAKING ROUND 7

The Empowered Communities East Kimberley (ECEK) Joint Decision Making (JDM) process is a practical mechanism to support government funded organisations to align their activities to community priorities and the East Kimberley Aboriginal Development Framework.

BBY recently completed the seventh round of Joint Decision Making, which is a twice-yearly process that invites community members to have their say on programs and contracts being delivered for Aboriginal people in the region and influence Government decision making.

In this round, BBY assessed contracts delivered throughout East Kimberley and worked in partnership with Empowered Communities West Kimberley to ensure there is an Aboriginal voice in Government investment across the region. This is the second time BBY has worked with West Kimberley leaders on a regional approach to Joint Decision Making, and future collaborations are underway to push the Empowered Communities agenda.

After seven rounds, since 2018, the total amount of Commonwealth Government investment that has been

assessed through this process totalled to over \$23.5 million.

BBY acknowledges and appreciates the participation of community members and Local Management Committees across the region in ensuring that community voices are heard in funding decisions.

Are you interested in being part of a community panel?

If you are an Aboriginal person with interest, knowledge or lived experience across a variety of social, economic, family and cultural areas & want to participate in providing feedback on Government-funded programs and services in your community, please feel free to get in touch with Natasha Storey at 0428 108 777 or community@bby.org.au



Empowered Communities seeks to create a genuine and balanced partnership between Indigenous organisations, government and corporate Australia, where everybody is working together on a level playing field and towards a shared strategy - Andrea Mason

DESIGNING A FIRST NATIONS VOICE

Empowered Communities Submission to the Australian Government

Kimberley Regional Governance: One Region, One Voice?

In the East Kimberley, Empowered Communities has been working hard to bring together local voices for regional influence. In 2016, Empowered Communities East Kimberley established a backbone organisation Binarribinyja yarrowoo (BBY) as a neutral facilitator of reform. We brought together people and organisations in Kununurra, Halls Creek and Wyndham. We built a membership base among Aboriginal organisations of the East Kimberley and mechanisms for community engagement at the sub-regional level, our Local Management Committees. We hosted community forums to shape our Regional Development Agenda and mobilised community panels to bring local voices into shared decision-making about government investment. We have had successes, but the East Kimberley is vast and we have more work to do to bring voices from remote communities and emerging PBCs into the shared agenda ... p27

An extract from Empowered Communities Submission to the Indigenous Voice Codesign, 2021, p27

To download a full version of the report please visit empoweredcommunities.org.au

In April 2021, Empowered Communities made a submission to the Indigenous Voice co-design groups outlining recommendations to the Australian government.

The recommendations emphasize a partnership framework that connects four policy pieces:

- Recognition of Indigenous Voice
- Empowerment through Structural Reforms and Indigenous Agency
- Improving the Productivity of Investment
- Closing the Gap

This article gives a short overview of some of the key recommendations submitted by Empowered Communities leaders to help refine transformational reforms that aim to empower communities.

The need for Constitutional Recognition

Empowered Communities leaders believe that structural change in the form of both constitutional recognition and legislative backing is required to enable a partnership that can solve the problems that both the Australian government and Indigenous people are facing to help close the gap. Indigenous leaders believe that once constitutional recognition is achieved details of the Voice can be enacted in legislation so that the relationship between government and Indigenous people is mutually beneficial.

The need to improve Productivity of Investment through Structural Reforms

Empowered Communities recommends a new approach that ensures better returns from investment over time on the money spent on Indigenous Australians, thereby increasing productivity.

Empowered Communities has so far introduced a successful innovative process called the Joint Decision-Making process to align government funding to the needs of Indigenous People and avoid duplication. However, a lot needs to be done to scale what is required. But under the Voice program, Empowered Communities believes there is greater opportunity to maximize productivity.

The need for Our Voices to be heard from the ground up

Empowered Communities recommends that practical outcomes will only improve when those on the ground are empowered to actively solve the problems they face. Hence, a new approach must articulate and mediate local communities' bottom-up self-determination through state and national policy and transfer ideas, knowledge, and experience both 'up' and 'down' throughout the system to increase overall capability so better outcomes are achieved.

The need to enable a better footprint in regions

Empowered Communities supports a membership of around 35 Ambassadors to the National Voice so that each region is directly represented. Capping the number of Local and Regional voices at 35 will ensure that regions are not forced to work together in unnatural structures. Instead, regions will build on their existing governance mechanisms with representatives who report directly to the government, increasing productivity.

Information was extracted from the report. To learn more, please donload a full version at empoweredcommunities.org.au

HIRE LOCAL- EMBEDDING MENTORING ACROSS THE EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

With over 40% of the resident population being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and almost 40% of this population group within prime working-age of 25-54 years, there is an excellent opportunity to move local people into employment.

The importance of embedding mentoring across the system in East Kimberley cannot be overemphasised. It adds value to organisations, individuals, communities, and families, increasing job opportunities and sustained employment.

Following the East Kimberley Employment Roundtable held in 2020, BBY has been supporting the development of a proposed initiative to embed mentoring across the East Kimberley employment

system. The strategy's main objective is to better support job seekers, employees, employers and support workers by either strengthening existing services or creating new ones.

The common goal of the strategy is to bring more Aboriginal people into sustained employment by ensuring that:

Job seekers: become work-ready and find the right job pathway

Employees: stay in employment and reach their full potential

Employers: are successful in employing Aboriginal people

Support workers: feel mentally strong and equipped with skills they need

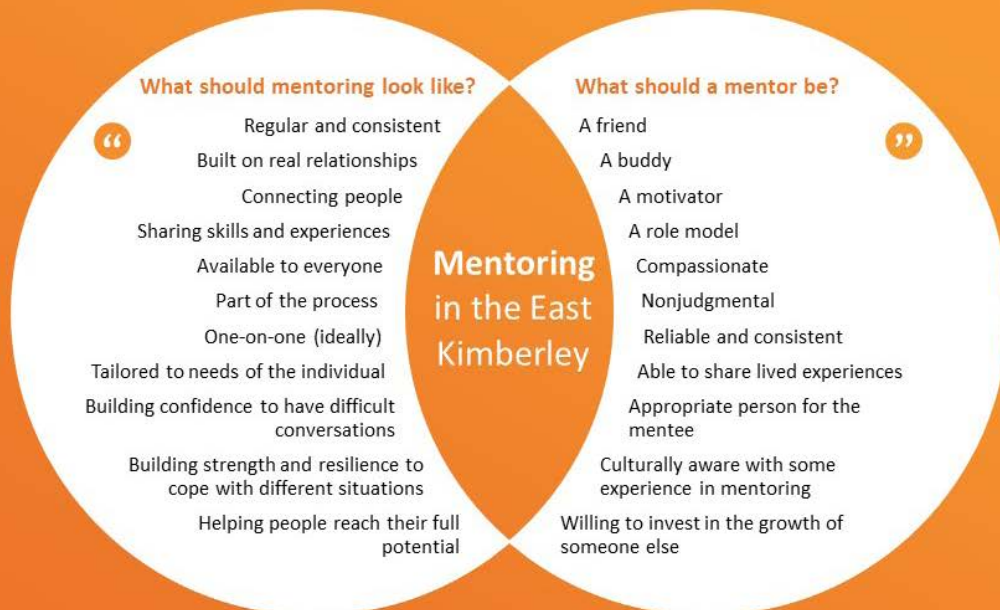
BBY will facilitate further discussions and consultations to ensure that employment and training sectors in East Kimberley receives the much needed support to spearhead mentoring across all systems.

Image Source: Morrgul Business Support

How we will embed mentoring across system

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We asked people across the employment system to define mentoring in the East Kimberley context



Source: Interviews with representatives from organisations across the East Kimberley employment system (See Appendix 1 for list of representatives).

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Early this year, BBY launched a Sector Development Campaign through a series of webinars and workshops that are designed to create opportunities for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO) in the East Kimberley to work together and strengthen operations.

The campaign is running under the theme “Stronger Organisations Working Together” and is proudly sponsored by Lotterywest.

The campaign activities will bring practical and relevant opportunities to strengthen the capacity of Aboriginal organisations across East Kimberley to meet the community’s needs.



Julia McIntyre from KAMS facilitating our Human Resources Workshop in Kununurra



Our Webinar Production Team ...

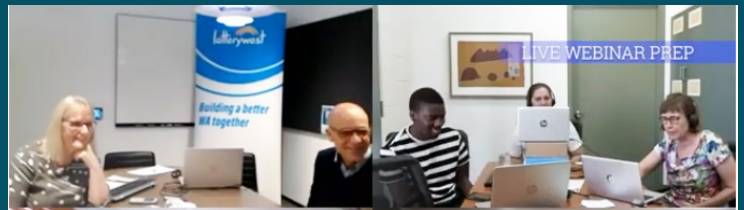
BBY’s Sector Development Coordinator Jenny Whyte and Community Development Adviser, Alison Gibson

LOTTERYWEST GRANT APPLICATION WEBINAR

The initial activity to implement the Sector Development Campaign was a webinar introducing organisations to the Lotterywest Grant program launched on 1 July.

Speakers from Lotterywest, Little Nuggets and the Kimberley Language Resource Centre shared practical advice on applying for a grant from Lotterywest.

The webinar was recorded and is available on our youtube channel: *Empowered Communities East Kimberley*



SECURING GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS WEBINAR

Our second webinar focuses on procurement and tendering processes. It gives practical advice on ways to promote the services organisations supply to government procurement officers and steps taken to prepare effective bids.

Speakers include Wendy Casey from Morrgul, Rosie Blood from the Department of Finance, Kenny Martin from Martin & Sons Contracting and Lani Levi from the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley.

The webinar was recorded and is available on our YouTube channel: *Empowered Communities East Kimberley*.



ESSENTIALS OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

BBY carried a one-day workshop in both Kununurra and Wyndham. The workshop focused on essential personnel management responsibilities, with a practical focus on recruitment and induction processes and management of the workplace environment. Our Guest Facilitator, Julia McIntyre, shared information on recent developments in HRM, including regulation changes, identify sources of advice and routine HR responsibilities.

COMMUNITY SUCCESS STORIES



JOURNEY TO HOME OWNERSHIP

HOW WUNAN HOME OWNERSHIP PROGRAM HAS SUPPORTED ONE'S FAMILY'S DREAM OF OWNING A HOME

Wunan's Pathways to Home Ownership Program has successfully assisted clients in Wyndham, Kununurra and Halls Creek purchase their own homes.

One success story is that of a local mother of five who was handed keys to her new home in Kununurra's town centre in May this year. She had lived in Kununurra for 31 years with her family and had faced many challenges navigating the property market to secure suitable house for herself, kids and grandchildren. But thanks to years of hard work from Wunans Foundation, the mother of five is now a proud homeowner of a four-bedroom house, where she lives with her family.

Contact Wunan (08) 9166-2407 for further information on the Pathway to Home Ownership Program.



Source: The Balance

EARLY YEARS AND DEVELOPMENT OF KIDS

STARTING SCHOOL IS AN ESSENTIAL MILESTONE IN A CHILD LIFE

Social Norm: All kids go to school so that they may complete for opportunities in life.

The Stepping Stones Early Years program run by Gawooleng Yawoodeng Aboriginal Corporation is making a significant impact in our community. Last term, the program maintained a constant attendance rate of kindergartens who were eager to go to school and learn. Their families, guardians and caregivers fully encouraged them to attend school and this has played a significant impact.

The Stepping Stones program is still underway, and for more information, please get in touch with Stepping Stones on 9169 1049.



Childcentre, Kununurra

TOWARDS SELF EMPOWERMENT

WHAT IS NIRRUMBUK DOING TO HELP FAMILIES LIVE GOOD LIVES?

Social Norm: Tenancy obligations are met so that living conditions may improve, and better housing opportunities are made available

Nirrumbuk Environmental Health and Services (NEHS) provides programs that are delivered directly to Aboriginal Communities and individuals throughout the Kimberley Region. Support is provided to improve the skills of tenants to maintain a stable and functioning household.

Contact Nirrumbuk Environmental Health Services 9193 7100 for further info on THRIVE program.



*Kununurra NAIDOC 2021 at
Whitegum Park*



Health Information To Keep Your Mob Safe

Everyone in our community can be affected by COVID19, but older people are most at risk from getting really sick from the virus.

The best way to protect yourself from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated. The COVID-19 vaccine is available to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 12 years and over. To make an appointment, have a yarn with your local healthcare worker, or visit healthdirect.gov.au/eligibility.

Remember, COVID19 outbreaks are still happening across the country. StaySafe by staying up to date!

Visit your local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Centre for more information.

Visit <http://kams.org.au/covid19-resources/> for more information.



Our Regional Agenda



Our Regional Development Agenda (RDA) identifies our shared strategic priorities for the East Kimberley region to improve economic, social and cultural development for Aboriginal people.

To help the community understand our Regional Development Agenda, BBY has developed an [illustrated version of the RDA](#), which aims to be a visual tool to inform community members about the RDA

‘Let’s all walk along the path of knowledge’



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Advocating Change Facilitating Choice