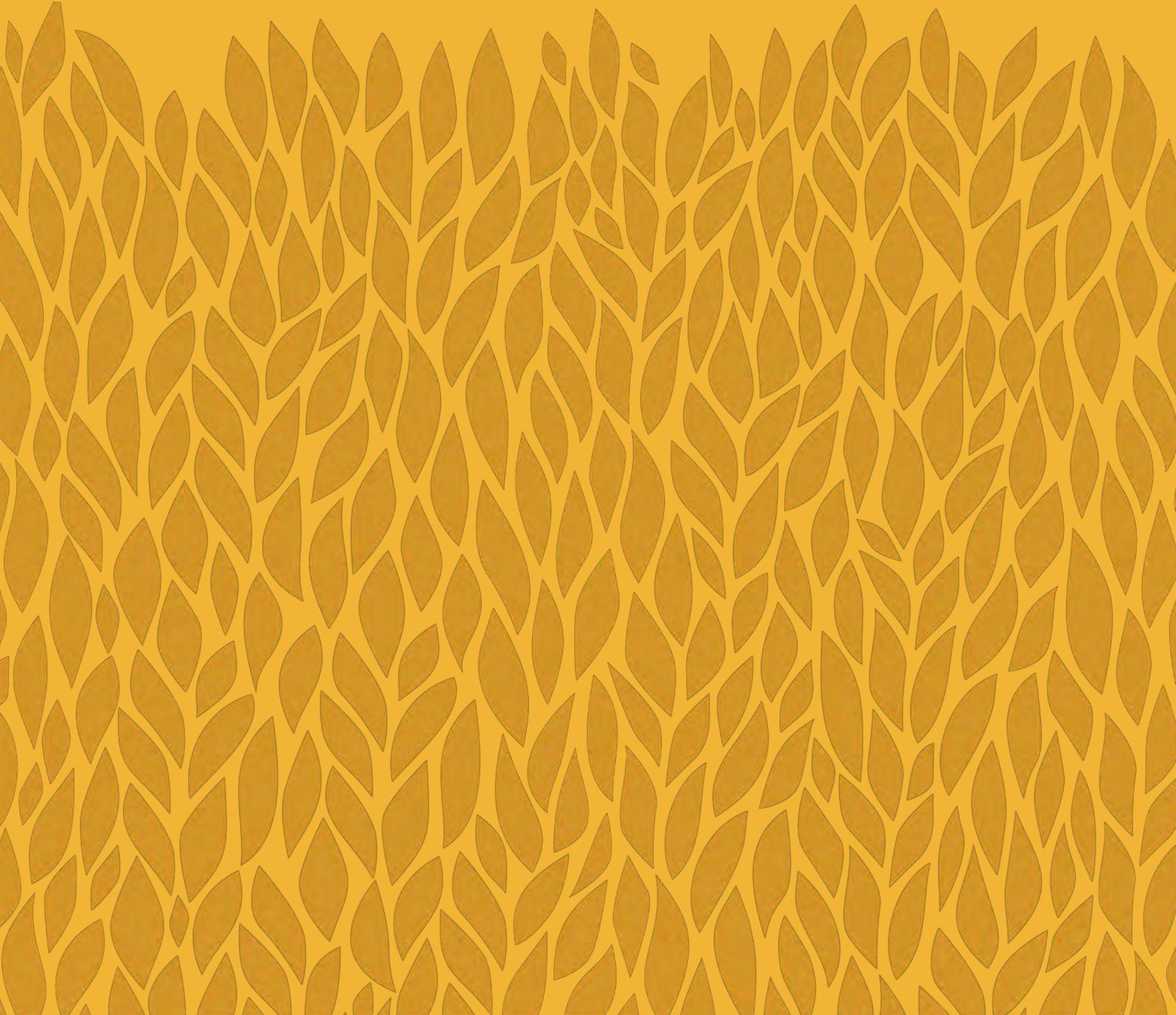


Evaluation

**STRONGER COMMUNITIES
FOR CHILDREN**



GAME CHANGERS



Acknowledgments

Thank you to the Stronger Communities for Children Evaluation Steering committee who contributed to the thought leadership in the design of the evaluation and advocated for the conduct of this investigation. Thank you to Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC) staff Kim Grey, Linda Ivatts and Ruth Nicholls for their thoughtful review and guidance.

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Winangali/Ipsos consortium acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the water, land and sea. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and/or communities that contributed to this research shared with us accumulated knowledge which encompasses spiritual relationships, relationships between people, relationships with the natural environment and the sustainable use of natural resources. This knowledge is reflected in language, narratives, social organisation, values, beliefs and cultural laws and customs. We respect that this knowledge is not static like the written word but responds to change through absorbing new information and adapting to its implications. Therefore, we wish to acknowledge Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities as joint custodians of their research findings. A number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people worked hard in their communities to make this research and report happen.

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List of shortened forms

Acronym	Definition
BOM	Board of Management
CTG	Closing the Gap
PMC	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
DSS	Department of Social Services
FP	Facilitating Partner
IAS	Indigenous Advancement Strategy
LCB	Local Community Board
NTER	Northern Territory Emergency Response
NTG	Northern Territory Government
QSSP	Quality Service Support Panel
SCfC	Stronger Communities for Children program
VSA	volatile substance abuse



"Specially to us [Aboriginal] people like giving power and opportunity to drive our own program." (Elder)

Community voice

"SCFC funding are giving Yolngu a practice at work and prepare Yolngu towards a real job." (Elder)

*"Ever since this program came into place, people are respecting each other and the community."
(Community Member)*

*"The new baby box program was a really good idea for this community and young mothers. When we first started our partners was shame to come along with us. Young parents did not know how to look after the kids properly and when they set this program up it's helping them properly. The course started up with just a few of us but now it's getting big even all the man come along to support their wives and kids. We see parents go and support their kids in school for bush trips and to read and write in [Aboriginal] language and English. They didn't have all of these programs before but we got it and it's working really good."
(Community Member)*

"The community needed what SCFC brought. Improvements, more community involvement on the decision-making, more coordination with service providers." (LCB Member)

*"Kids are going to school, look more healthier and strong, getting a lot of help from Clinic, School and support two ways. It's good now that they have listened to what the community needed and wanted."
(Community Member)*

Looking and focusing on SCFC is benefiting the community, their needs and aspirations. (LCB Member)

"People are busy doing training, looking for jobs and looking after their families. Families are making this community stronger by working together with all the service providers like the Clinic, School, Police, Local Community Board." (Community Member)

"Lots changing, happening with SCFC program; more employment and children know where this program is located. More support which is engaging [service providers] mediation, School, Clinic, Police and doing outreaching community and homelands as well including traditional owner working together." (Community Member)

More program and activities running in and out, more employment and services are going well." (Community Member)

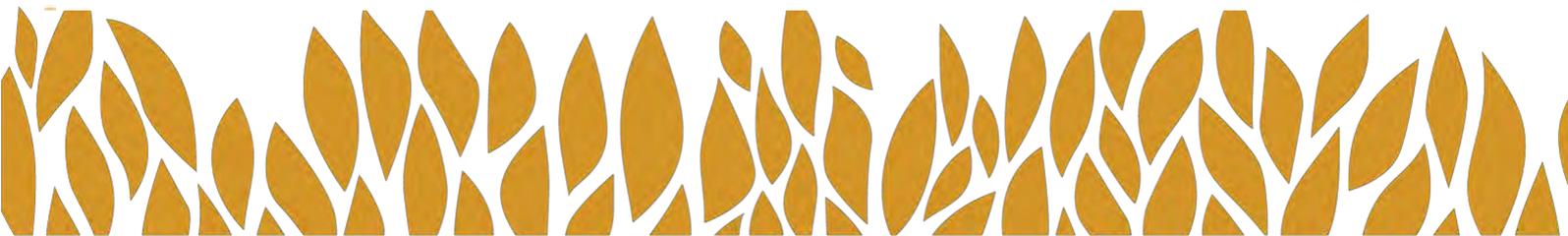
*"[SCFC] got everybody in this community working really good together. Old people, men and women and the school, clinic, police and youth worker."
(Community Member)*

"Local people talk about thing we need, like playground and equipment where the kids can play. We all come together and talk about what's going on and what kind of things we need here. That goes up to LCB. LCB is made up of male and female representatives from all the outstations. Ideas get put forward at LCB meeting, ideas from our community and all the other communities. They all get shared. They are doing what the community and local board members need." (ex-LCB Member)

*"Everybody doing work and supporting all the kids at school, working together with white fella and community people. Taking kids out on bush trips, healthier, going to school every day, clean faces and clean ears. Seeing lot of kids with right clothes and lot healthier because they got food in their house."
(Community Member)*

***"One heart underneath for children."
(LCB Member)***

"This SCFC is a good story we want to tell. We are proud of the work we have done in our communities." (LCB Member)



Growing stronger communities

The Stronger Communities for Children program (SCfC) is a community development program designed to ensure that people in communities have a **real say in what services they need and how they are delivered**. The SCfC is a place-based approach supported by local and external organisations. The SCfC resources and supports communities to own and lead local decision-making through cultural leadership in a Local Community Board (LCB), which is informed by strengths-based and evidence-based practice to develop a community plan.

The evaluation found that the SCfC is a catalyst for harnessing the aspirations of the community. It builds the momentum needed to drive local creativity and innovation into responding to complex social issues. The resourcing of the SCfC builds capacity for the community to lead, plan and implement the locally designed service responses. This capacity strengthening is an important precursor to delivering positive outcomes for children and their families. There are early indications of progress towards improved family functioning, positive participation in education, participation in cultural events and safety and wellbeing of children and young people and their families. The journey of developing and implementing the plan is building local capacity, increasing employment and improving social cohesion. Achieving the vision in the community plan will, in time, contribute to the Indigenous Advancement Strategy and Closing the Gap outcome indicators.

The SCfC improves service provision because:



The SCfC uses a pooled, place-based funding mechanism. Where the LCB is truly empowered to determine funding allocations, decisions are more appropriate and targeted. This leads to improved performance and accountability of service providers to community as well as government.



The SCfC gives the community a vehicle to voice their past experiences and share their perceptions of their current environment. When decisions draw on local intelligence and cultural knowledge, it helps to redirect funding into programs that work, reduce reinventing what is known to work and refine experimental learning so it is less likely to fail. It also improves the cultural safety of service provision. Efficiencies and productivity gains result in service delivery that is better value for money.



The flexibility and adaptability of SCfC enables fast responses but also allows the time needed to develop responses to more complex issues. Community members and stakeholders can see actions implemented promptly once decisions are made. This contributes to local credibility and support for the SCfC. The SCfC can also undertake the detailed, deeper dialogue needed at community level to design service responses that have a strong fit with community needs and circumstances.



The SCfC attracts partnerships and collaborations. This significantly increases employment opportunities, leads to improvements in service collaboration and attracts government and non-government investments in services. Collaboration and capacity building occur during Knowledge Sharing Workshops, regional teleconferences across the SCfC communities.

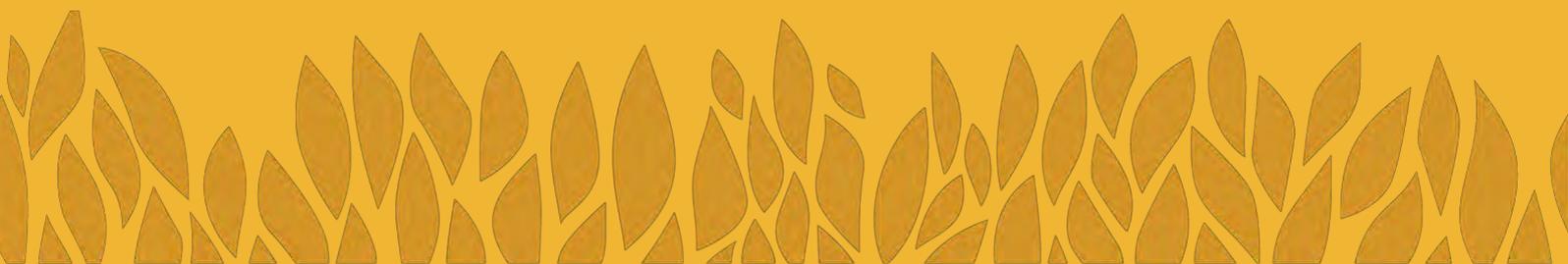


The SCfC program supports investments in local capacity building. These investments mean that LCB members and Facilitating Partners can engender collaboration between community groups and service providers. This in turn improves social cohesion, which improves on economic development and community functioning.



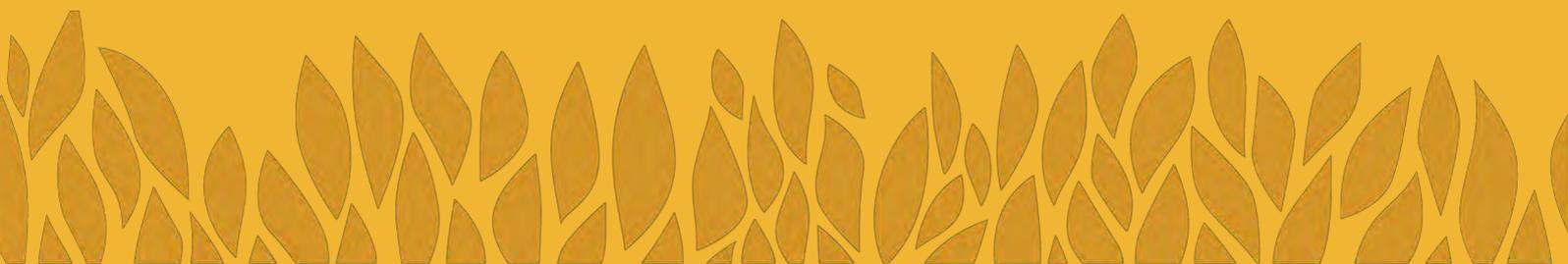
SCfC fosters innovation. Community capacity to lead, plan and prioritise services for children and families contributes to program innovation. This primarily occurs when LCBs feel they have demonstrated some success and gained the trust of government: they feel strong enough to experiment. Sometimes innovation occurs over time organically; sometimes in response to a critical situation in the community.

The SCfC demonstrates how government **can do business differently with remote communities**.



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Executive summary

This evaluation is an investigation of a community development approach to service delivery. It focuses on the implementation, processes and progress of a model in which the Australian Government is delivering services differently. Rather than a top-down service delivery model, it is the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations that draw on cultural knowledge and community strengths to identify and source services that reflect unique cultural practices and needs in each location. The purpose of the evaluation was to find out: Is this working as intended, for whom and to what extent?



Figure ES2: Where SCfC currently operates

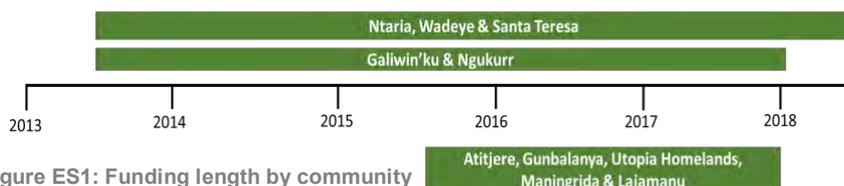


Figure ES1: Funding length by community

Stronger Communities for Children (SCfC) is currently operating in 10 sites in the Northern Territory. Five sites commenced in the second half of 2013, with four-and-a-half-to five-year funding agreements, and the remaining five began in June 2015 with two-year funding agreements (Figure ES1).

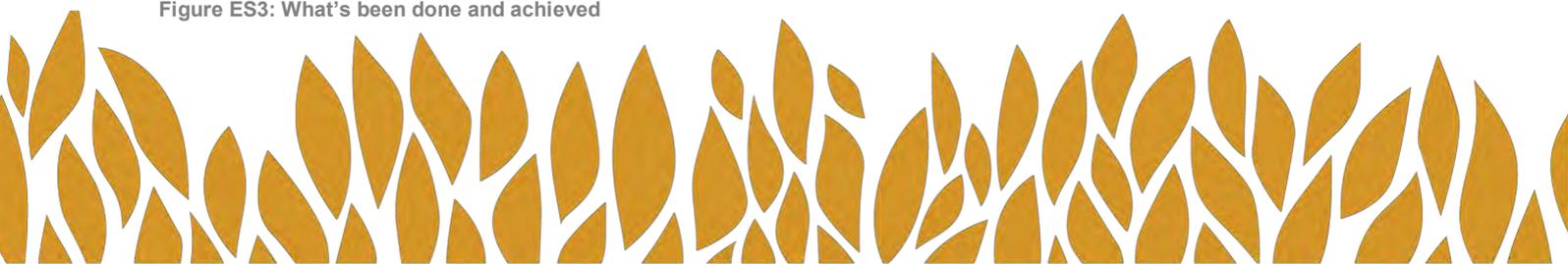
As at 30 June 2017, there were 195 community members volunteering their time to participate on the Local Community Boards (LCBs) across the 10 communities (Figure ES2 and ES3). Where the voluntary LCBs were underpinned by strong cultural governance structures (*the right way*), it facilitated healing of old conflicts and brought people together again to focus on children and young people (*the right goal*).

The SCfC resources an overarching Quality Service Support Panel (QSSP) and, in each site, a Facilitating Partner (FP) to support the LCBs to develop a community plan. The community plan articulates the vision for the community and the services required to achieve it. Community members' feeling of ownership and pride have increased as a result of developing the community plan.

Implementation of the community plan is resulting in delivery of a suite of holistic integrated services determined and/or designed by the community. The SCfC is improving collaboration and getting the community, stakeholders and service providers all working together on a common goal. Communities that have been funded for longer have had more time to build strong foundations. Having more time is creating space for long-term decision-making and better planning. At the 30th June 2017, 76.4% of 309 SCfC employees identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people (Figure ES3).



Figure ES3: What's been done and achieved



The amount being achieved by this voluntary decision-making team is extraordinary. The SCfC is a program that brings communities together to focus on what they all cherish most: children, young people and their families.

There were 126 activities that address different areas of focus identified by the LCBs (Figure ES4). Each activity has underlying logic driving different outcomes that align with the vision expressed in the community plan. The SCfC design encourages innovation and experimentation; it uses local problem solving and a strengths-based approach supported by an evidence base to justify the investment. Across all sites, around one-third use of evidence-based practice and one third are using innovative or new services. The evaluation found that activities with well-defined problem statements are more likely to have better understanding of what strengths in the community can be harnessed and guided by evidence-based practice to make them actionable but also adaptable to the needs of the community.



Figure ES4: Areas of focus for activities

The SCfC is delivering to the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) outcomes (Figure ES5). A

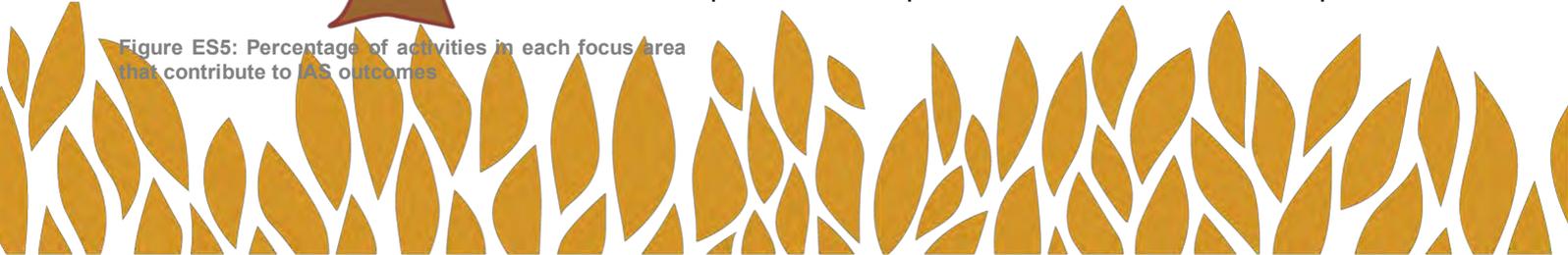
large proportion of the activities delivered (69%) are building the community capacity of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations to deliver services, and at least half (55%) are building community capacity to lead, plan and prioritise services that families and children need. One of the most prominent outcomes of the SCfC program is the capacity strengthening embedded into the activities. This capacity strengthening is an important precursor to delivering positive outcomes for children and their families.

The SCfC is influencing change in the communities even without requiring any additional SCfC funding. It is achieving this through its ability to get other jurisdictions to fund activities or programs or projects that they were otherwise not aware of, or thought were not possible, or did not know how to do in community.

One of the stronger themes in the qualitative findings is that the pooled funding administered locally gave power to the LCBs to monitor, and authority to FPs to manage, service provider performance. The funding modality made the service providers accountable to the local community throughout the delivery period, rather than accountable to government through performance reports delivered after the service period.



Figure ES5: Percentage of activities in each focus area that contribute to IAS outcomes



Social innovation is occurring on many levels. When LCBs had had successes with structured or established programs, they were ready to experiment. They felt they had the trust of government as well as the strengths base and capacity needed to be courageous and attempt complex social change. On a few occasions, innovation occurred out of necessity, either over time organically, or urgently as an immediate response to a critical situation identified in the community.

The essential elements of the SCfC that contribute to improving service provision decision-making (**what made it work well**) are the LCBs that have good cultural representation across the community coupled with real control over what services should be funded.

Creating the common goal or vision through the community plan taps into and improves the way communities acquire, retain, retrieve and share information and knowledge, which means they start with problem definition and are not driven by externally imposed solutions.

The place-based economic development and enablers of social capital create stronger, cohesive communities. When this is supported by elements of collective impact, the SCfC works well. The elements needed (which are present to varying extents) are greater funding certainty; longer funding cycles; and an embedded monitoring, evaluation and learning framework at a program level.



Figure ES6: Elements of Stronger Communities for Children

SCfC has traversed changing policy settings and political landscapes from 2013 to 2017. Across that time, there have been three ways of seeing the desired outcomes of the program: mapped against the original guidelines for SCfC outcomes; mapped against the current contracted SCfC outcomes; and mapped against the IAS programs: children and schooling; culture and capability; jobs, land and economy; safety and wellbeing. There is a danger that the snapshot nature of this evaluation creates an impression of a conclusive judgement of SCfC impact, when the program is



still in a stage that may show the most promise for transformational change over the long term. Figure ES7 shows that a good foundation for change has been built.

Much effort has been expended and impact achieved in the IAS culture and capability quadrant. Improvements in this quadrant were shown to link to improvements in the social determinants of health and wellbeing, with investment focused on early intervention and prevention through programs about education on parenting or nutrition rather than primary health care and wellbeing. That said, the FPs and QSSP found it difficult to measure the impact of these specific initiatives, because health and wellbeing data at the community level was either not unavailable or inaccessible.

Under the current SCfC outcomes, qualitative data from the evaluation show that social cohesion and community safety have had significant outcomes, but quantitative justice or administrative data at a community level have not been available to support this evidence. Some FPs and LCBs also struggled with whether SCfC was a schooling program or an early development program, and different communities allocated their effort according to the needs and strengths in the community. However, effort into schooling and children is emerging, and the foundation has now been laid in these communities to get traction on these activities and areas of focus.

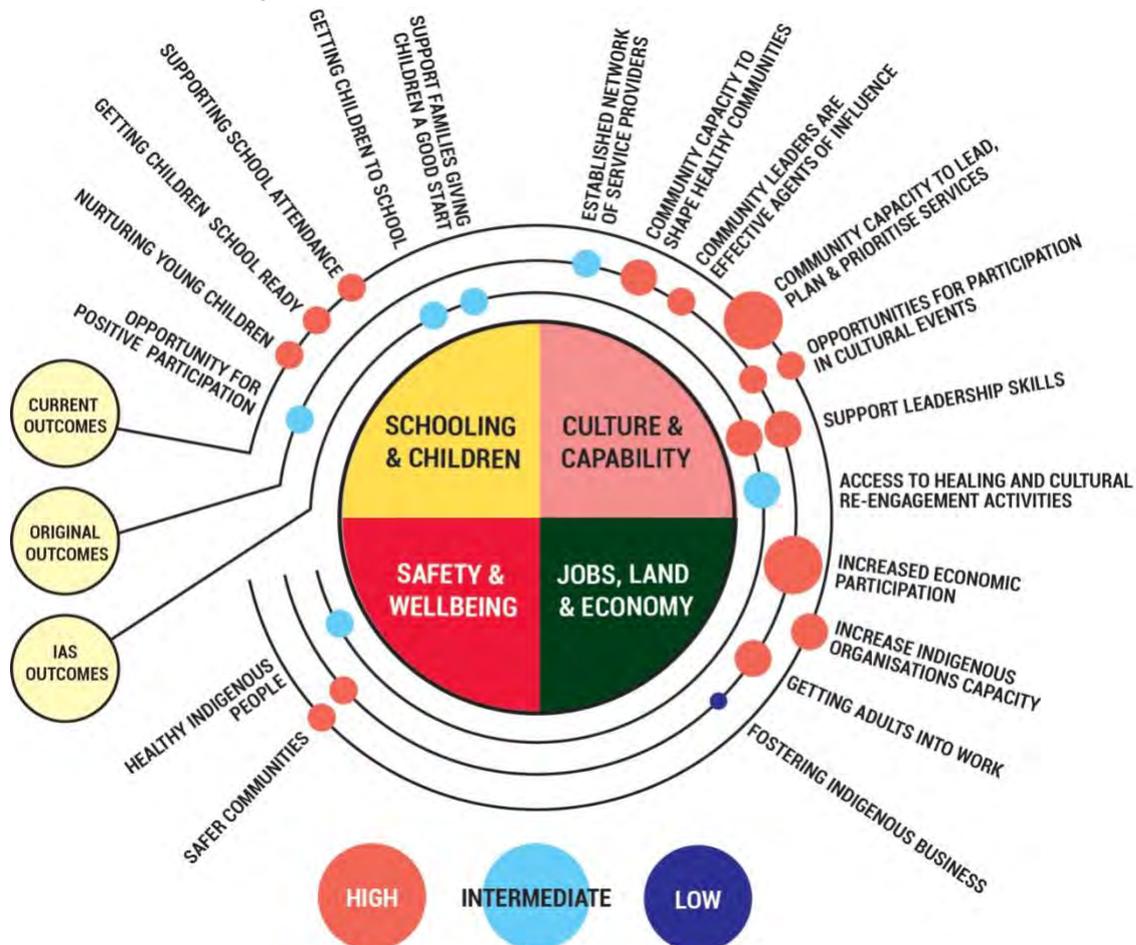
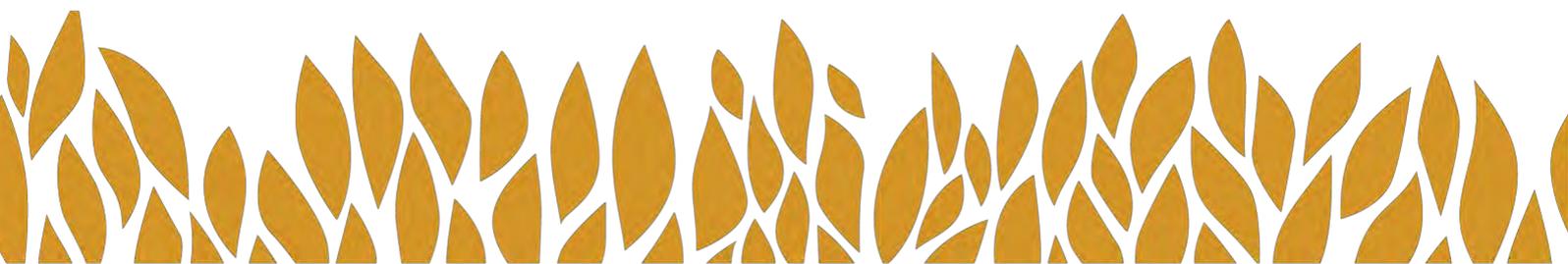


Figure ES7: Visual representation of effort into areas of Stronger Communities for Children

Figure ES7 is a visual representation of SCfC effort (colour of the dot) and the amount of impact that was achieved (size of the dot, i.e. larger = greater impact). The SCfC original design outcomes are represented on the dashed line. The current contracted outcomes are represented on the outer ring, and the IAS outcomes are on the inner ring. Technical explanation of the evidence underpinning the effort and impact is contained in the full evaluation report.



1. Introduction

This evaluation examines the progress of the Stronger Communities for Children (SCfC) program and tests the underlying assumptions about design and delivery of SCfC by comparing expectations set out in program theories with evidence and observations about progress to date.

The evaluation assesses the implementation of the SCfC program across its 10 sites over the period 2013–2016 and examines the availability of early signs of progress towards SCfC program outcomes in 2017. The focus is on how the SCfC design assumptions and delivery strategies support the achievement of these outcomes, in a range of contexts and communities, by contrasting theory with practice. This should clarify what the program is in practice, how it varies and whether it appears to be working as intended. What is unique about this model of service delivery is that government is delivering services differently. Rather than a top-down government service delivery model, SCfC is the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations drawing on cultural knowledge and strengths to identify and source services that reflect unique cultural practices and needs in each location.

This report includes findings from all 10 communities and more detailed case studies in three sites. Evaluation findings will be used to inform planning and service delivery in the communities and by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC) to make decisions about future design and funding of the program.

Four evaluation goals are addressed in this evaluation:

Objective 1: Clarify the theory of change by reviewing the alignment of the initial program logic (Appendix F) with changes in SCfC policy goals or program guidelines and produce a revised program logic or theory of change (Chapter 4) if required.

Objective 2: Describe how the model has been implemented, whether the model has been implemented as intended, how has this varied by place or circumstances, to what extent and why (Chapter 2 and 3).

Objective 3: Examine whether communities are pursuing similar or different outcomes, how and why. In particular, this should clarify whether sites have focused on children's development and if so, how this outcome is being pursued (Chapter 5).

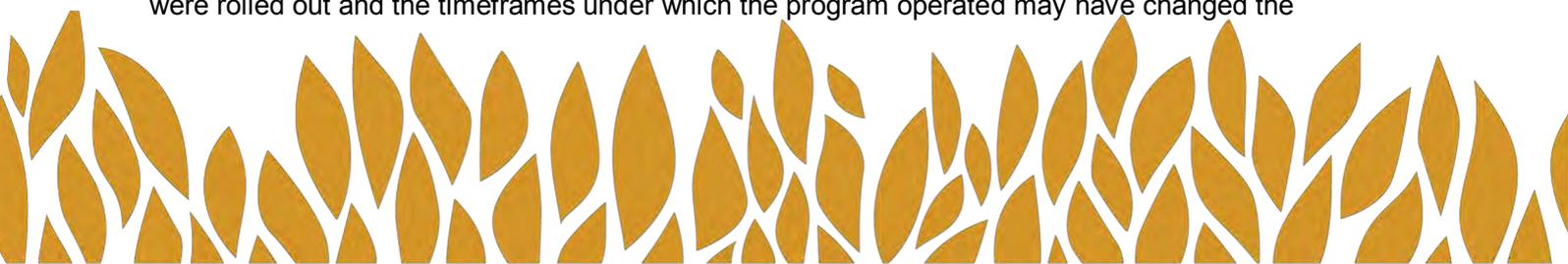
Objective 4: Assess the likely contribution of SCfC to longer term outcomes for the communities across the 10 sites and across the program in general. While it is too early to make a full assessment of outcomes, the evaluation assesses progress towards intended outcomes based on testing the underlying program theories against available evidence (existing data, literature and community feedback) (Chapter 4 and 5).

The overarching evaluation questions and the evaluation goals to be met for each objective are outlined in Appendix A.

Evaluation approach

The purpose of the evaluation was to clarify – before the scheduled funding ends – what the SCfC program is in practice, how it varies in different contexts and whether it appears to be working as intended. The evaluation questions aimed to determine if the set of resources (the SCfC program) that have been implemented in a complex system (remote Aboriginal communities) have made a difference and, if so, what types of outcomes were achieved.

Understanding how the model of the SCfC program works and when it works requires an understanding of the way it was interpreted, how it was implemented, whether this affected the range of interventions undertaken and whether they were successful or not. How the interventions (services and activities) were rolled out and the timeframes under which the program operated may have changed the



community context for the child, their family or their environment in such a way that a child (or family) made different choices or, perhaps without being aware of why, behaved differently. This knowledge was drawn from existing evaluation data from the Facilitating Partners (FPs) and interviews with the Local Community Board (LCB) members, service providers and FPs who were involved in those interventions, rather than a large suite of additional measures administered across the community.

The approach taken was grounded in theory but refined for practicality given how the research is framed and the budget and timeline constraints. The substantive theories that have been incorporated and the rationale for doing so is outlined in Appendix A.

Evaluation method

A detailed description of the evaluation methodology is outlined in Appendix A. The methods used for this report include: literature review; document review of community plans and activities; knowledge sharing workshop discussions; an online survey of Facilitating Partners; depth interviews with key stakeholders and primary data collection in three communities. Fieldwork in each of the three communities utilised local researchers. The evaluation commenced in November 2016 and concluded in August 2017.

Ethics

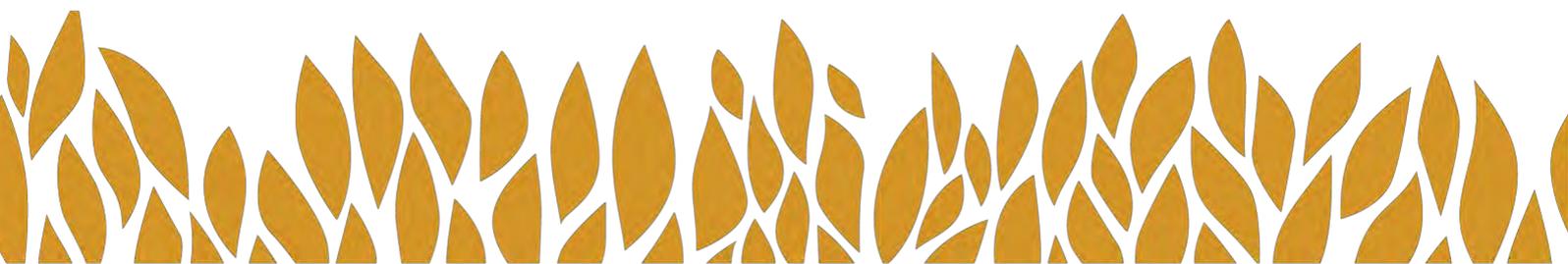
Ethics approval was received from the Central Australian Human Research Ethics Committee and Menzies School of Health Research Ethics Committee. The evaluation commenced in November 2016 and concluded in August 2017.

Limitations and considerations

This evaluation is a post-implementation measurement, therefore it is limited in its capacity to measure change over time. Results from qualitative data from community members reflect the contexts of the three case study communities where fieldwork was undertaken. Qualitative and Quantitative data from Facilitating Partners and Local Community boards reflects the contexts of those communities where an online survey was completed and participation in the Knowledge Sharing Workshops occurred. Qualitative discussions are subjective and self-reported, so where outcomes are discussed in this report they reflect perceptions of the storyteller; these insights extend beyond the limitations of administration data. The story technique provides rich insights that explore key themes, but small samples are not representative of the entire populations of the communities concerned. Further, quantitative administration data is neither granular enough nor sufficiently contextualised to draw local conclusions about program outcomes with certainty, nor to support qualitative findings. Both qualitative and quantitative data are required to build an adequate understanding.

Reading this report

This report comprises eight chapters. The introduction provides an overview of the evaluation. The second chapter provides background information about what the SCfC is, because it is important to understand the structure of the SCfC to navigate the evaluation findings about the roles in and phases of the program. The third chapter focuses on how the SCfC works and its implementation. The fourth chapter focuses on why the SCfC works and discusses the theory of change. The fifth chapter states what has been done under the SCfC, and the sixth chapter focuses on the outcomes that have been achieved. The seventh chapter discusses possible implications for future evaluation of the SCfC. The eighth chapter provides the three case studies.



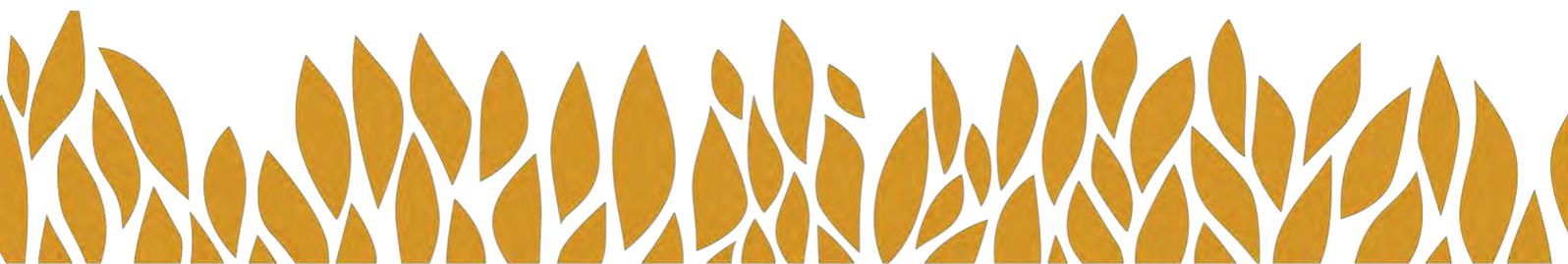
2. What is SCfC?

The SCfC is a community-driven mechanism supported by local and external organisations as follows:

- **Local Community Boards (LCBs)** comprising Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents from the target community. LCBs establish priorities for action under a community plan and decide on projects to be subcontracted. LCBs advocate for children, assist with project planning and implementation and are involved in monitoring and evaluating how the program is going. LCBs are volunteers.
- **Facilitating Partners (FP)** are ideally local Aboriginal corporations. Where an Aboriginal organisation was not available or had limited capacity to manage the program, an NGO with a pre-existing relationship with the local community was contracted. Where possible, there is an expectation to build capacity of a local Aboriginal organisation to eventually manage SCfC. FPs help implement the priorities determined by the LCBs, improve linkages between agencies and manage subcontracted activities. FPs support informed and accountable decision-making by the LCB and facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity development for program stakeholders. The majority of management roles in the FPs tend to be filled by non-Indigenous people. Nearly all of the SCfC coordinator roles were non-Indigenous people. Where an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person filled the SCfC coordinator role, they were not from the local area, had English as a first language and high educational attainment and understanding of the modern and western world. Where possible, there was an expectation that a local Aboriginal resident would eventually fill the coordinator role.
- **A Quality Service Support Panel (QSSP)**, originally comprising Ninti One, Menzies School of Health Research and the Northern Institute. Under contract renewals in 2015, Ninti One and Menzies remained on the QSSP. The QSSP did an extensive consultation process where required and was tasked with working closely with communities to establish the LCBs and support the service delivery capacity of the FPs with technical expertise and training assistance. Batchelor Institute was also contracted in 2013 to deliver pre-employment training. However, this did not progress as originally intended, and very limited training was provided in just some of the Tranche I communities. Prior to the implementation of the SCfC there was an extensive consultation process with communities to identify potential sites by the QSSP. The QSSP often also supported the FPs during times of intermittent capacity or when FP staff changed.

To assist in the development of SCfC in each location, implementation was established in three phases (Figure 1). In Phase One the aim is to establish local ownership, culminating in the formation of a LCB and to identify a FP who will be funded for coordination of SCfC services in the community. It was intended that the QSSP will facilitate this consultation process and develop service delivery resources and tools. However, this did not occur in all sites as some had existing capacity or existing leadership structures to facilitate this consultation directly with the PMC without the QSSP. Whilst the development of resources for service providers and a baseline evaluation were also envisaged in the implementation plan, this did not occur as they were deemed out of scope for the QSSP contract with the PMC.

Phase Two is an establishment phase where the QSSP works closely with the FP to develop an implementation strategy for their community and the establishment of good governance for the LCB. In this phase the aim is to create a community plan that addresses the visions and priorities that the LCB would like to address. This only occurred in sites where this additional support was requested by the LCB or the FP.



In Phase Three the FP implement the community plan by developing a number of activity plans. The FP will subcontract a range of local service providers to provide the particular service needs of the community as identified in the community plan. The QSSP provide assistance to the FP as requested for evidence-based practice information, monitoring and evaluation support to monitor the quality of services delivered.

At the time of this report sites were at various phases of implementation.

Figure 1: SCfC implementation phases



The SCfC is currently operating in 10 sites in the Northern Territory. Five sites commenced under Tranche I in the second half of 2013 as a central element of the Child, Youth, Family and Community Wellbeing package under the National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory. Three sites with Aboriginal organisations received five-year funding, and two non-Indigenous organisations partnering with Aboriginal organisations received two-year funding. Following machinery of government changes in September 2013, the government announced an Indigenous reform agenda with the introduction of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS). The SCfC moved under PMC's Schooling and Children program.

Five more sites commenced under Tranche II in June 2015, with two-year funding agreements under the IAS framework for both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous organisations. The design of the program has traversed different policy and political environments and therefore the intention of the program has changed focus subtly from the model implemented in Tranche I sites to Tranche II sites. Despite the differences in focus, the current expectations of the SCfC are that it will contribute to the IAS objectives and Closing the Gap (CTG) targets. Any further extension or expansion of the SCfC is now a decision for government.

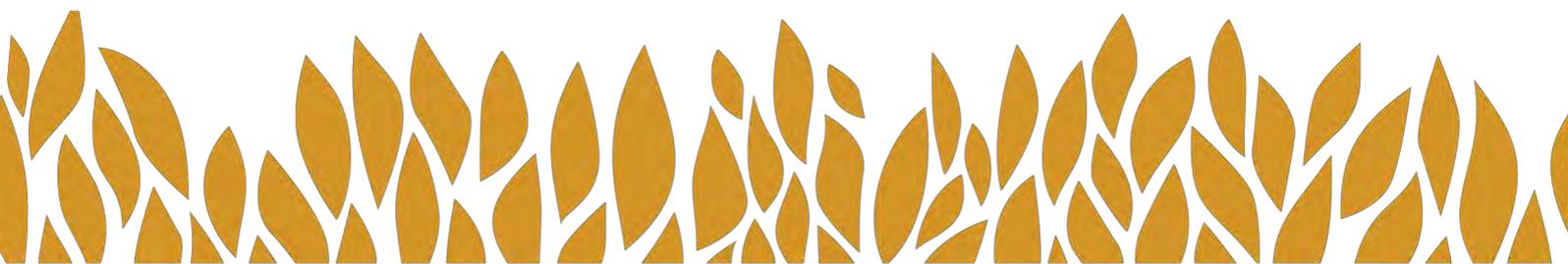


Table 1 lists the communities and gives further details about their SCfC program.

Table 1: Overview of SCfC communities

This table gives an overview of the SCfC program by community, providing further details about the leadership structure, facilitating partner ownership and funding amount and term for each community.

Tranche I	Leadership structure	Facilitating partner ownership	Funding amount and term
Wadeye	A new leadership structure was formed to create the SCfC LCB that works within culturally understood leadership structures.	Aboriginal organisation	\$3,582,998 30/06/2018 5 years
Galiwin'ku	An existing leadership structure was used for SCfC LCB members.	An Aboriginal organisation is hosting a non-Indigenous organisation	\$3,267,479 31/12/2017 4.5 years
Santa Teresa	The SCfC LCB is fluid and unstructured but works within culturally understood leadership structures.	Aboriginal organisation	\$2,682,998 30/06/2018 5 years
Ntaria	The Ntaria Leaders Group acts under delegated authority from the Tjuwanpa Board of Management (BOM). The Leaders Group is not required to have a Tjuwanpa BOM member as a member of the group but BOM members and Leaders Group members may at times be the same people.	Aboriginal organisation	\$2,682,998 30/06/2018 5 years
Ngukurr	A new leadership structure was formed to create the SCfC LCB that works within culturally understood leadership structures. In addition, young people were supported by Elders to have a seat at the table.	Aboriginal organisation	\$3,267,479 31/12/2017 4.5 years
Tranche II			
Utopia Homelands	An existing leadership structure was used for SCfC LCB members.	Aboriginal organisation	\$1,295,651 31/12/2017 2.5 years
Lajamanu	A new leadership structure was formed to create the SCfC LCB that works within culturally understood leadership structures.	Non-Indigenous organisation	\$1,074,657 31/12/2017 2.5 years
Gunbalanya	A new leadership structure was formed to create the SCfC LCB that works within culturally understood leadership structures.	Aboriginal organisation	\$1,313,554 31/12/2017 2.5 years
Maningrida	A smaller working group from an existing leadership structure was created for the SCfC LCB members.	Aboriginal organisation	\$1,731,439 31/12/2017 2.5 years
Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya)	Not available (missing data from online survey)	Non-Indigenous organisation	\$1,089,868 31/12/2017 2.5 years
Ninti One	Not for profit implementation partner	Aboriginal organisation	\$3,200,000 5.5 years

The context presents a number of challenges for the evaluation. Firstly, the application of the SCfC varies across sites in some critical aspects, such as the implementation time frame, funding cycles, party in power and subsequent policy alterations to the desired outcomes. Secondly, each of the 10 communities represent vastly different contexts, including but not limited to the remoteness, historical legacy, governance, Aboriginal ownership and/or capacity of the Facilitating Partner (FP) organisation.

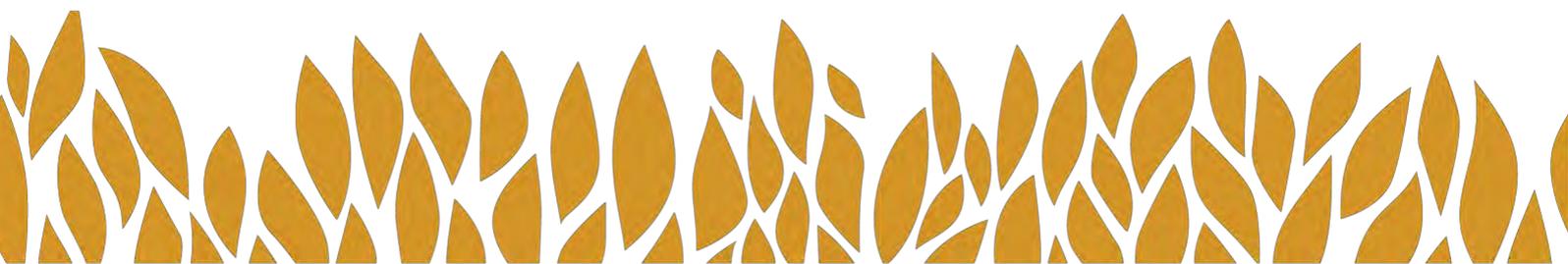
Generalisation of the findings masks important contextual aspects of what makes SCfC successful or what has challenged the program implementation. A realist approach has been used to help propose which contextual factors matter so that SCfC program resources yield the best outcomes for communities and their children. Further rationale for our evaluation approach is outlined in Appendix A.

3. How does it work?

SCfC resources and supports communities to own and lead local decision-making which is informed by strengths-based and evidence-based practice to develop a community plan. The community plan articulates the vision for the community and the services and/or activities required to achieve it. These services and/or activities should improve family functioning, positive participation in education, participation in cultural events and the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and their families. Achieving the community's vision through the implementation of this plan will also contribute to improving the IAS and CTG outcome indicators where they are aligned.

SCfC is designed to support strategic service responses that are highly structured collaborative efforts decided upon by the LCBs to achieve substantial impact on a large number of social problems that are often interrelated. As such, SCfC aims for collective impact. There are five key conditions that distinguish collective impact from other types of collaboration, and these are present in SCfC:

- **Common agenda:** Everyone (PMC, FPs, QSSP and LCBs) has a shared vision for change, including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed actions, as evidenced by the community plan. There was a lot of consultation with community members by FPs and the QSSP to create each LCB. SCfC created the space to develop the community plan with local ownership by funding the FPs to facilitate the LCBs. The process of developing the community plan is a significant achievement. SCfC resources strengthen the capacity needed for each FP through this planning phase through to implementing the plan.
- **Shared measurement:** Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all involved (PMC, FP, service providers funded and the QSSP) ensure efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable. There was always significant focus on measuring feedback and evaluating the activities and services funded under SCfC. This has become a greater focus as communities move into Phase Two (Figure 1), where they are delivering services and activities. The main measures utilised are community member feedback, collected locally. To improve shared measurement, communities need to be able to access more administrative, local level health and education statistics so that they can integrate it with their perceptions about what is happening in their community. Community dashboards (see example in Appendix B) were created by the QSSP for this purpose, but the data lacked utility (see data in Appendix B) and there was little support to build local capacity in the LCBs to use the dashboards effectively. Towards the end of this evaluation, the QSSP delivered impact assessment training sessions in all those communities that indicated they wanted it. The need to improve shared measurement and further evaluation is discussed in Chapter 7.
- **Mutually reinforcing activities:** The roles of PMC, FPs, the service providers funded and QSSP must be differentiated, while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan (community plan) of action. The SCfC created a platform or forum for people to work together on common goals and contribute what they could in their role to the achievement of the plan. This presented a significant change to the way some communities had been working, in silos created by different agency or jurisdictional funding. The more that community stakeholders were reminded of the community plan, the more likely it was that mutually reinforcing activities occurred.



- **Continuous communication:** Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives and create common motivation. FPs worked hard to ensure that stakeholder communication was undertaken. LCBs worked hard to ensure communication with community members was undertaken. Some communities used social media sites, community noticeboards, community radio as well as informal and formal communication channels. The QSSP communicated regularly through quarterly teleconferences, Knowledge Sharing Workshops, SCfC updates, SCfC website and social media.
- **Backbone support:** Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organisation with specific skills to support the initiative. The SCfC had two types of backbone support: modern (QSSP) and traditional (cultural leaders). In the case of SCfC, the QSSP provided a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative to support the FPs in delivering services. These were modern skills such as technical or best practice, academic (evidence for theories of change) and financial or business management support for the FPs. The support provided varied depending on the level of existing governance structures and capacity of the FPs and whether the community wanted to work with the organisations that formed the QSSP. Most support was needed at Phase One, forming the LCB, and sometimes at Phase Two, in developing the community plan. In Phase Three the QSSP have been providing evaluation support and assistance with identifying evidence-based practice. Across all phases, the QSSP coordinated Knowledge Sharing Workshops, teleconferences and regular updates.

The traditional backbone provided cultural authority and guidance from the acknowledged cultural leaders of the community. Their support helped guide the FP to do things in the right way. The Elders and cultural authorities in community are vital to decision-making; however, they are not always available or able to volunteer the amount of time and energy needed to participate on the LCB. The LCB was said to work best when it drew on this backbone support to guide them. The way in which they drew support or the level of support varied across communities. The support needed varied depending on:

- whether the cultural leaders were represented on the LCB
- whether the FP was an Aboriginal or non-Indigenous organisation
- whether the FP was managed by non-Indigenous staff.

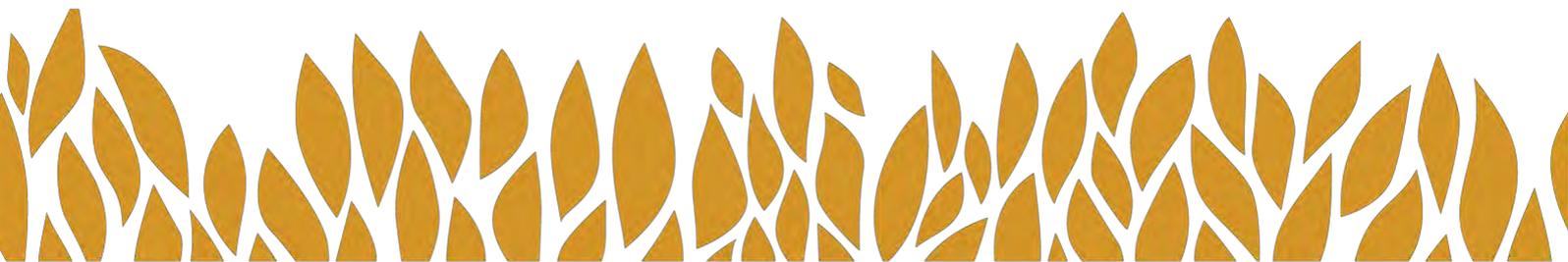
SCfC creates the opportunity and motivation necessary to bring a range of stakeholders who have never worked together before into a collective impact initiative and hold them in place until the initiative's own momentum takes over enabling independence. Three preconditions of a collective impact initiative are an influential champion (SCfC coordinator) or a group of champions (LCB), adequate financial resources in a pooled fund, and a sense of urgency for change such as the CTG 2020 Targets and frustration with the lack of effective strategies in the past.

Generally, the environment that best fosters collaboration is one where people believe that a new approach is needed (place-based community-controlled funding of service delivery), and local influential champions (LCBs and FPs) bring people together to pool resources and work better together. Within the historical context of these 10 remote communities, the SCfC is a new way for service providers, government and community organisations to work together to fund and deliver services. Specifically, government is trying to **do business differently** in these communities.

SCfC is adaptable, responsive, flexible and – importantly – given a lot of space to evolve over time. The SCfC enables communities through the LCB to identify, fund and monitor the quality of



services at a local level. When communities are empowered in this way, ***the right services are delivered at the right time to a higher standard overall, achieving better outcomes*** for children, young people and their families.



4. Why does SCfC work?

What matters are those elements of the SCfC that enhance better informed decision-making about service provision. Where these elements have been well supported and are present, better decisions are made and more positive outcomes achieved. The essential elements of the SCfC that contribute to improving service provision decision-making are the LCBs that have good cultural representation across the community and have a real say about what services should be funded because they control the funding. Creating the common goal or vision through the community plan taps into and improves the way communities acquire, retain, retrieve and share information and knowledge, which meant they start with problem definition and can be decisive or creative about what services are needed rather than be solutions-led.

The place-based economic development and the growth of social capital creates stronger, cohesive communities. When this is supported by elements of collective impact, the SCfC works well. Other elements that are not always present but are considered necessary for better decisions are greater certainty for planning with longer funding cycles and an embedded monitoring, evaluation and learning framework so the program can define learnings from evaluation in each location.

Making decisions the right way: culturally understood leadership structures

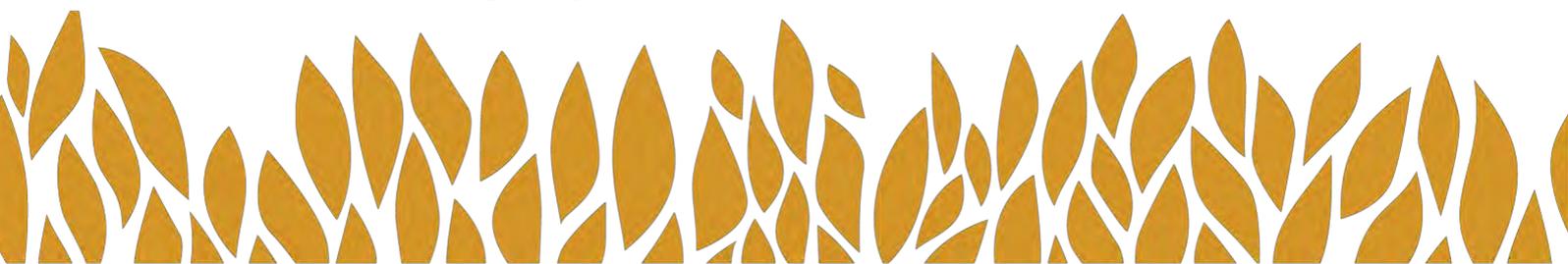
The evaluation found that LCBs take many forms. Some use existing leadership structures or have formed new leadership structures. Generally, what works best in each community and with each FP was debated and discussed in detail in Phase One. The more discussion and better alignment across the community to the governance structure for SCfC, the stronger the LCB. LCBs did not necessarily have to comprise the cultural leaders or the board members of the FP. Strong LCBs are said to have connections through to the cultural authorities and culturally understood leadership structures in the community.

The connection and obligation through culture (**cultural lore**) ensures that the LCB makes decisions that can be supported by the Elders and leaders (**the right way**). LCBs also need to be representative across clan and family groups, even if those groups do not have acknowledged formal leadership roles in the community or traditional ownership of the community land. It was said to be important because the heads of families and clans still have leadership roles.

"People are working with own responsibility. Many Yolngu people seem to understand and realise this SCfC program is within the community, grounded [here] and are from strong people [LCB] that supported this program." Community Member

In some communities, it was important to acknowledge the difference between making decisions by Traditional Owners about issues that impact on their connection to the land versus making decisions about service delivery for everyone living in the community, who may not be on their traditional land, or where the two interest groups intersect. There may be different governance structures across the community for different types of decisions, and the LCB had to navigate these layers of leadership to get alignment with a community plan which aimed to ensure that ALL children, young people and their families received the services they needed, not just factions of a community.

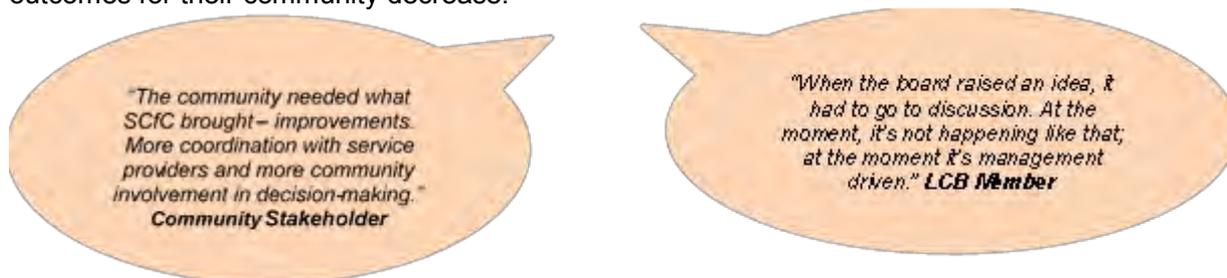
Community members felt they had an opportunity to **have a real say** for their community when there were culturally understood leadership structures that they could connect through to the LCB so that decisions were made **the right way**.



Having a real say in what communities need: learning to trust

The evaluation found that where communities are well represented by their LCBs, they feel they have a **real say** in the services delivered in their community and the quality of outcomes, cultural competency of the service and the value for money due to better coordination of services improve. Where LCBs are not fully representative of the community, community members feel they are either not consulted about decisions or not part of the process, or they are less likely to know a decision had been made.

Where LCBs feel their decision-making is over-scrutinised by other parties or deemed out of scope because of crossing jurisdictions and therefore not meeting funding guidelines, opportunities to improve outcomes for their community decrease.



Sometimes there is confusion in how a decision from the activity plans is communicated, which creates distrust between LCB and government, with the FP trying to mediate. Plain language is needed for the LCB to understand, but changing the LCB's words in an activity application to language that PMC prefers, which is more technical and uses evidence-based over cultural or community strengths-based rationale, breaks down the trust of the LCB.

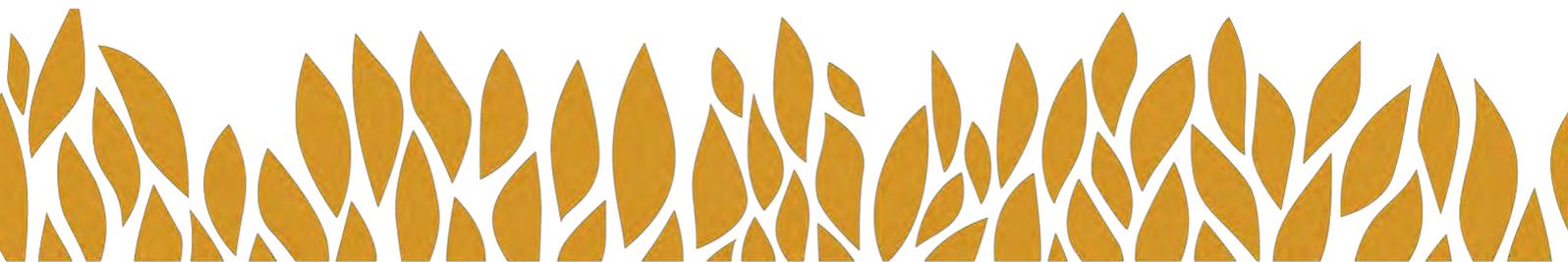
Sometimes LCBs feel that their Aboriginal knowledge systems are not trusted as much as the western knowledge systems in the decision-making process and/or in the documentation of the decision. Sometimes the LCBs do not trust the evidence-based practice that the QSSP or FPs provide. There is sometimes tension between strengths-based approaches and evidence-based approaches. When PMC finds it hard to see or understand community strengths, LCBs feel restricted and defined by the rules of the SCfC. They feel that they do not have a real say and that PMC still control the funding based on their values and judgement. When the FP is able to articulate community strengths in a way that the PMC considers is evidenced-based, it is more likely to be accepted.

When LCBs have a **real say**, it also means that community strengths or some existing capacity is being recognised and acknowledged. They feel proud of their achievements and proud of their community.

Where there is **respect** for the value of **all** the different knowledge systems and trust that LCBs know what their community needs, the LCBs feel can make informed decisions.

When there is **respect and trust** between LCBs and government, and **strengths are communicated as evidence-based** by the FP, the LCBs feel they have more freedom to evolve their thinking and push for more innovation or to experiment with new service provision or practice. They are motivated by the ability to create things that work. They feel empowered by the level of influence their decision-making has, and they own their decisions and are determined to make them work.

There are valuable lessons to be learned about respect and trust in this cross-cultural space. Navigating language and conceptual understandings is a critical capacity on the part of the FP and government staff, and unless these communications are managed well, the SCfC program shows there can be problems that impact on community or government perceptions of the credibility of the program.



A different way to contract, administer and fund services

SCfC funds are administered differently from other service delivery models used in Northern Territory remote communities, where a range of service providers are individually contracted to deliver in one or across a number of communities by a range of government agencies. The SCfC funding modality is a key design element where an equity strategy uses a pooled funds vehicle, such as a funding agreement with a community-controlled organisation, to invest in a range of services under the umbrella of program initiatives. The evaluation found that this type of funding modality (**community-controlled pool of funding**) has a number of strengths which help make the SCfC work:

"Varying the budget to meet the real needs of the program is a much simpler process and quicker ... with the government changes it would take weeks and a lot of administration to get it changed." FP

- It enables a quick and flexible response to changing circumstances and the unpredictability in remote communities, which in turn allows the channelling of resources to services and activities that can adapt in reasonable time to complex needs.
- It minimises the administrative burden on organisations delivering the services, enabling them to spend less resources on administration and more resources on service delivery. It reduces transaction costs and lessens the administrative burden for government by contracting one community-controlled organisation rather than many organisations.
- It enables collaboration with other funders, to pool money in partnerships to get better locally funded initiatives that are more likely to work. This might be scaling up or top-up funding for existing programs or attracting new funding to the SCfC where extra resource boost would improve outcomes.
- Better focused resources go to areas where funds are most needed because of the local identification of need and community input into service delivery. This minimises wastage, the need to refund poor-performing programs and duplication of resources.
- It allows the allocation of resources to various forgotten (i.e. not politically popular or lacking in media-driven advocacy) or unclaimed (i.e. do not neatly fall into a funding jurisdiction) programs that the community needs. It also allows funding for preconditions (i.e. things that need to be in place before a service or activity will work).
- It enables innovation by supporting pilot projects and new partnerships that may sit outside of government procurement time frames (and the need to delegate authorisation and submit to lengthy or arduous tendering processes). It means that services get delivered more responsively, when the services are needed.
- While this has not occurred yet, the potential to support Aboriginal business development was discussed. Pooled funding could support small start-up local businesses, which could meet service needs without the red tape and uncertainty of applying for grants or writing funding applications to government. This could occur under a potential forth phase of the SCfC.

The evaluation found that the type of funding modality has a number of challenges that need to be overcome to make it work better.

- Capacity within the community-controlled organisations for accountability and transparency, results-based management and the effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of operations vary from FP to FP. Some FPs with strong financial management capacity do well, but others have to learn the 'money story'. When the LCBs are volunteers, there is a lot of responsibility involved in understanding quite complicated investment strategies and funding guidelines.

There was an ambition to have all FPs be Aboriginal organisations, but as this was not always possible the compromise was to have non-Indigenous FPs transition to Aboriginal FPs over the implementation of the SCfC. No transitions occurred. The QSSP's ability to support and strengthen some of the FPs' capacity was said to be limited by the length of the contract period, and more time was needed to build organisational capacity.

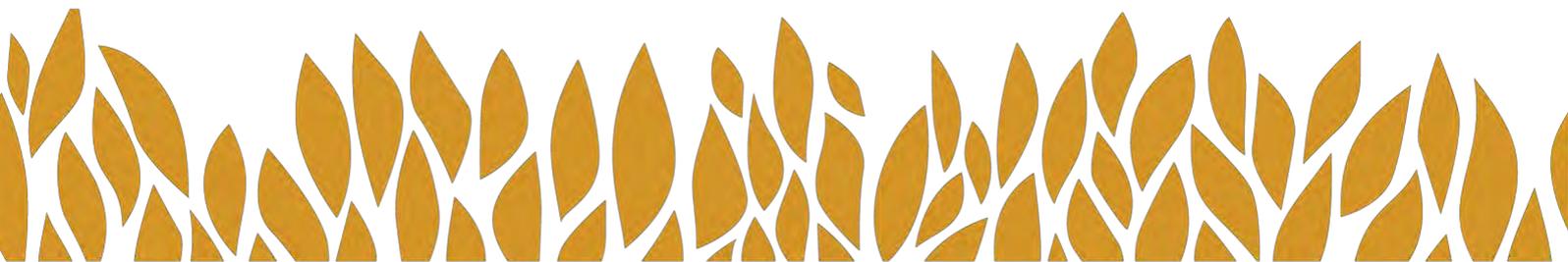
- This type of pooled funding requires solid accounting practices to monitor and report results, both within the FP and across other agencies and service providers to better understand the cost utility and cost effectiveness of the SCfC. The level of sophistication needed to measure some of the financial benefits of SCfC is not present in all the FPs. Where good financial records of collaboration are shared between partners, there is good evidence of cost savings to all levels of government that can be realised from this pooled funding.
- Activities funded under the SCfC should have outcomes that are aligned with the overall goals of the SCfC. However, activities sometimes had outcomes that appeared to have little contribution to the overall goals of the SCfC. When this occurred, it was said to be because funding was directed towards issues such as resolving or addressing community politics or conflict, keeping popular activities happening that may not have been delivering good outcomes, or supporting programs under key influence of the LCB to strengthen confidence, trust or goodwill for the SCfC program. These expenditure decisions seem to be diversionary or popular, with low linkage to outcomes for children, young people and their families. However, as a complementary outcome, these activities may contribute to social cohesion, giving the SCfC the momentum and traction it needs to do what is intended in the funding.
- Long-term funding or funding certainty is a strength for the Tranche I sites, which have four-and-a-half- to five-year contracts; however, this is a tension for Tranche II sites, that have only two-year contracts. The ability to plan for expenditure that works for the community is often also restricted by either front loading or back loading the contract payments in lump sums with expiry dates. Contract expiry dates contribute to uncertainty and can slow down the momentum built up over the implementation of the SCfC.

"How can I invest all my heart with only six months left in a contract?"
LCB Member

Pooled funding or this type of place-based funding modality works when there is a healthy tension or natural balance between the freedom of the local authority (LCBs) to make SCfC spending decisions and their need to be accountable to the funding body (PMC) and to their broader community.

Tapping into the way things are done here

In the business world, institutional or corporate memory is the accumulated body of data, information and knowledge created in the course of that business system's existence. In this report, community memory is a term used to explain a concept that is extended beyond the corporate memory of an organisation to refer to the collective ability to store and retrieve knowledge and information from the community as a larger system. Community memory includes traditional knowledge but also more formal records, as well as strategies and tactics and the embedded knowledge of local people, local organisational culture and local processes. Modern businesses consider corporate knowledge, defined by the experiences of its employees, as an asset. In Aboriginal communities, the lived experiences of the people who live and work there define what may be termed 'community knowledge' or 'local intelligence'.



Community memory may influence current decision-making through shared understandings that evolve and become part of a social system. Those which remain constant even after key individuals have left the organisation and/or community are strong memories. This is done through the formation of collective interpretations regarding the outcome of decision-making. Strong community memories are usually characterised by the stimulus and information stored at decision making. For example, the story telling that may have led to the decision making, the season, the mood, the emotional responses and the symbolism. This is often captured in social media (Figure 2). It affects present decisions when it is retrieved. Aboriginal communities are rich in information that has been for many years an untapped or unacknowledged resource for decision-making.

To access the community memory takes mutual patience and trust between local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous service providers. Community memory is eroded when Aboriginal communities have programs that are funded by different agencies under different thematic responses with different funding cycles. This type of ad-hoc program response creates a high turnover of non-Indigenous staff who leave before trust is fully established or before they have learnt to listen patiently to the community stories, or programs stop and start without explanation because decisions have been made outside the community. The SCfC represents a radical departure from other thematic program responses for Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory by applying community memory. A focus on tapping into **how things are done here** through the community memory, utilising local intelligence, is a key design element in the SCfC where collective decision-making draws on the embedded knowledge of the community.

The evaluation found that the SCfC benefited from the conscious incorporation of strong community memory.

- Evaluation of activities funded under the SCfC stimulated reflection, which created community knowledge. Community memory consists of accumulated information regarding past decisions. This information is not centrally stored, but is split across different retention facilities in the community in various services, organisations, agencies and jurisdictions. However, each time a decision is made and the consequences evaluated, some information is added to the community memory. Open access to acquired knowledge from evaluation information must be transparent and shared in the community. More importantly, evaluations of services and programs stimulate evaluative thinking among community members (through participation in the evaluation) and acquisition of information and knowledge occurs at a collective level.
- Past experiences can be retained through social interaction. The language and frameworks in a community can be used to form shared interpretations of the systems that reflect past experiences and are repositories for embedded knowledge. Social interaction is an important mechanism for sharing interpretations of the environment. Formal and informal structures such as those generated in SCfC activities (ceremonies, festivals, community events, social media) can facilitate social interactions (i.e. between youth and Elders or service providers and clients). These shared interpretations of the past and present constitute a social memory, a store of information about a community's perception of the environment.
- Local intelligence is retrievable either automatically or in a controlled way. The intuitive and essentially effortless process of automatically accessing community memory usually results as part of a sequence of actions, such as SCfC-supported activities mentioned above in regard to evaluative thinking and social interaction where interpretations of collective lived experience are shared. When information and knowledge are created in a memorable situation, they are more likely to be acquired, retained and therefore retrieved. Controlled retrieval refers to the deliberate attempt to access stored knowledge, which in the case of SCfC can occur as people access artefacts such as books, comics, videos, films, documentaries and social media that communities have created to record their story for sharing now and later retrieval. Community events and the erecting of monuments or painting of buildings or other infrastructure items also made the SCfC memorable.



- The people who have been on the SCfC learning journey understand the value of the community memory and listen to the LCB members. While it was not explicitly stated, the acquisition, retention and retrieval of community memory was a conscious part of the SCfC design. The SCfC encourages innovation and relies heavily on the community memory of the LCB members to access and use past experiences so as to avoid repeating mistakes and to harness the valuable knowledge. The LCBs reinforce the need to retain community memory by wanting locally based workers, not fly-in/fly-out workers who take knowledge away. It is very important that the LCB feel listened to and that their local intelligence is used.
- SCfC program coordinators know how to access knowledge of the community ‘qua’ community (or the manner in which it is ‘being’ a community) through the LCB members. Being a member of the community ‘qua’ community includes knowledge of the political system, of the culture and of how things are normally done within the community. It can include the knowledge of who is an expert, where a particular person is at any given time and who is the right person to contact for a specific problem. Where knowledge of the qua community is strong, there is less dependence on others (outsiders) to do the organising, and a complex system can become self-organising, predictable and functioning. This means that often the LCB can get the **right people** to do the **right things** that make an activity work or increase engagement or participation. This in turn means that things are done the **right way** and people in the community feel respected.
- The Knowledge Sharing Workshops created artefacts of cooperation. These events gathered representatives from all 10 participating communities, and the records of these are visible and examinable. They are the forum for discussion on the program progress and ideas which were recorded as common knowledge. The extent to which the rich information and knowledge shared was captured, stored and easily accessible by the communities contributes to a collective community memory for the SCfC program. When the Knowledge Sharing Workshop includes community stories and case studies to be shared, the community must **remember and retell** their story to others. When others hear a case study, it triggers them to reflect and remember and retell their story. This practice contributes to improving community memory.

When SCfC Local Community Board members do study visits to other SCfC sites, they not only look at projects being delivered but they spend time (via a short workshop/presentation) sharing how they each tell their own SCfC money story, what formats work for them and what learnings they had.

"Ideas get put forward at the LCB meeting, ideas from our community and all the other communities; they all get shared."
LCB Member

"It's how we do things our way, talking with our families and then talking together."
Elder

The concept of a community memory is a useful way to think about how information and knowledge is acquired, retained, retrieved, organised and shared in the SCfC. The evaluation found that to varying extents the SCfC program design enhances and improves community memory to address the potential management challenges of turnover such as losing LCB members, SCfC coordinators or PMC contract managers when they move on. Some communities have developed strategies that mitigate against the risk of losing community knowledge, such as using a mentoring program within the FP, building a larger

"We say to the new ones [service providers], 'This is how it is done here if you want to make it work'." **FP**

"Take us seriously. We are here supporting the community, here sharing and passing on our knowledge." **LCB member**



network of LCBs, extending its LCB membership, undertaking research and evaluation, managing social media sites and creating documentaries.

The SCfC gives the community a vehicle to voice their past experiences and share their perceptions of their current environment. When respected, this local intelligence supports getting the right people doing the right things the right way. Tapping into the community memory leads to better decision-making, particularly when it helps fund programs that are working, reduces effort of reinventing the wheel, refines experimental learning so it is less likely to fail. Knowing how things are done here helps organisational processes gain greater efficiencies and productivity.

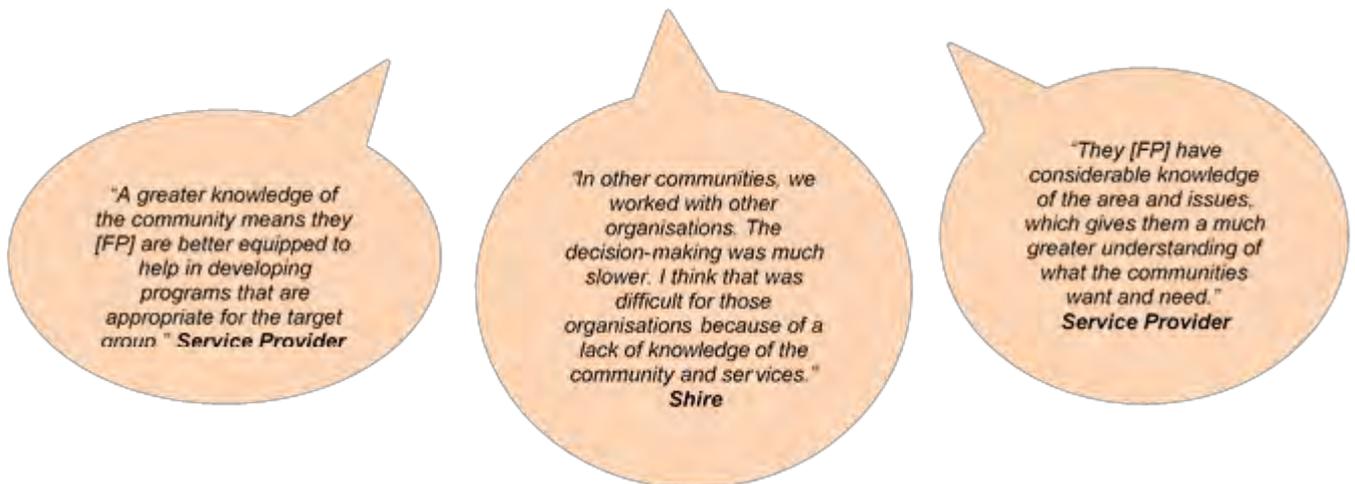
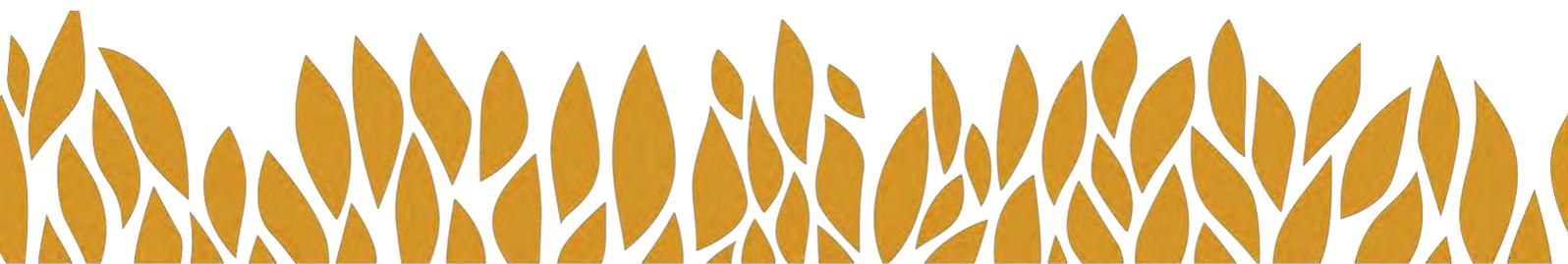


Figure 2: Community memories being reinforced, shared, stored and retrieved through social media



Building stronger, cohesive communities

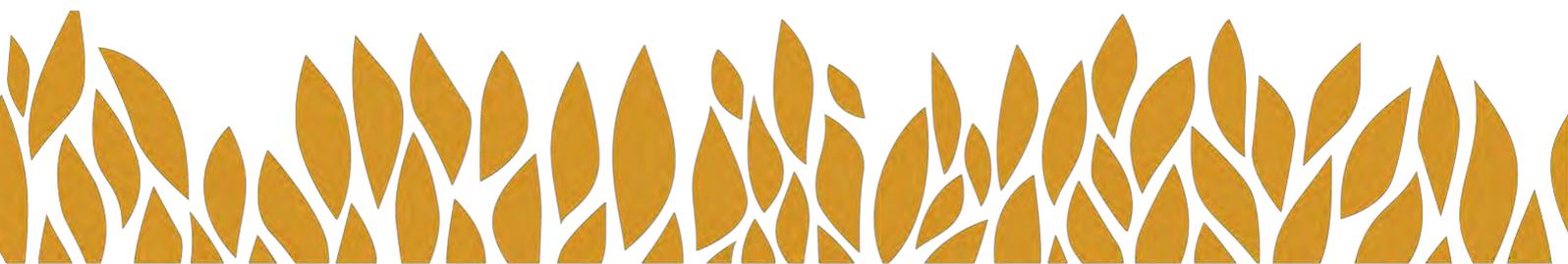
The evaluation found that SCfC recognises that service interventions are highly structured collaborative efforts. These efforts are needed to achieve substantial impact on a large number of social problems, which are often interrelated, and therefore FPs need to have a strong social network. Semantics around the wording of 'coordinating' services meant that FPs often pushed back on being seen as playing official or administrative roles in community, as they felt that it burden their already limited resources. However, when these roles grow organically because of the strength and influence of the LCB or community-controlled organisation tapping into the community memory, then the SCfC program takes on an unofficial advisory or collaborative role to better coordinate service providers for the community. Where LCBs and FPs become the go-to people, they have greater influence in a range of decisions made in the community. The building and strengthening of social networks to better inform decision-making by the LCBs who have a strong community vision has built the social capital in some communities. Social capital can be described as the networks with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate cooperation within or among groups.

Successful economic networks use their social capital to facilitate social entrepreneurship. Some FPs have built social capital such as trust, confidence, solidarity, compassion, helpfulness, friendliness and hospitality by providing and sharing information and advice with other service providers and agencies in the community. Where the SCfC creates bonding or bridging social capital, it mitigates the risk of government-funded services failing or delivering poor outcomes (regardless of whether these services are funded by SCfC or another agency). The reason for this was said to be because the clients of the service are the community members, and they are represented through their LCB to the FP who has now developed a strong voice in the social network. The FPs, on behalf of the clients (community members), are able to use their influence to hold the service provider accountable for quality service delivery or to help the service provider implement their program more successfully in a culturally appropriate way. If the FP builds a strong social network, it is more likely to be communicating the SCfC and community vision across the community, working with service providers to become strong influencers in the community.

The SCfC influences decision-making for the community both inside and outside the program funding. Where there are strong social networks, a common goal and shared aspirations of change, social capital is built and strengthened. This enables greater collaboration and coordination of service providers to meet the community needs. Where social capital exists, it increases the confidence of other service providers, agencies and funders when making investment decisions. On some occasions, it attracts funders to SCfC communities.

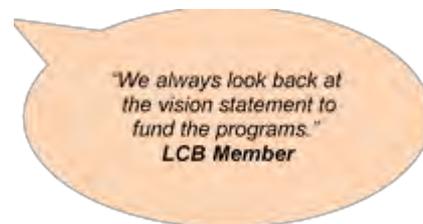
Starting with the problems not led by solutions

Prior to SCfC, despite a range of political interventions and service provision being funded, the disparity between people living in remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory and other Australians did not always improve and often got worse. In some cases, indicators appeared to worsen after the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER), because the focus on measuring and reporting increased the accuracy of records. This disparity between life outcomes is believed to exist because the availability and access to effective services is not equal, and the needs of people living in remote Aboriginal communities are greater due to the historical legacy of colonisation. It is recognised that service delivery is a challenge in rural and remote areas because of large distances, small populations and the costs associated with providing even basic infrastructure. The task of providing services in small remote Aboriginal communities faces additional challenges linked to the history of these places, the intersection and overlap of government jurisdictions and the specific cultural and political traditions that have existed in these communities for decades. Services that were delivered under the NTER had varying degrees of success, but most were considered to lack grassroots ownership and cultural



competency. To respond to the disadvantage of living in remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, a new model of service delivery was designed: the SCfC.

SCfC is underpinned by community-driven cultural knowledge from the LCBs, which is used for identifying what activities the community needs, guided by the community plan. The SCfC design encourages innovation and experimentation; it uses local problem solving and a strengths-based approach supported by an evidence base to justify the investment. The evaluation found that activities that use community-driven cultural knowledge have well-defined problem statements, and it is more likely that the strengths in the community that can be harnessed are well understood and articulated. If these strengths are also guided by evidence-based practice, the activity is actionable and adaptable to the needs of the community.

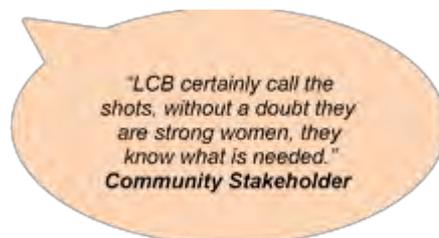


Problem identification and explanation were sometimes too superficial, describing the symptoms (**surface story**) but not being detailed enough to explain the causes (**deep story**). This led to difficulties in articulating the theory of change in the activity plan and finding services that might be evidenced to support change. At other times, the deeper description of the problems and their causes was just too confronting or culturally inappropriate for the community to discuss (i.e. sexual abuse, suicide and family violence) and document. Where the skills of the LCBs, FPs and QSSP can articulate the problem sensitively and adapt practice to best meet the expectations of the community, the activities are more likely to be embraced by the community.



Sometimes the appropriate responses to a well-defined problem could not always be supported by SCfC funding because it may have been deemed out of scope or the responsibility for another agency to fund (i.e. state government agencies such as housing or education or health, and local government such as the shire). Where SCfC has built social capital, the FP influences these other funders to support or collaborate on specific initiatives.

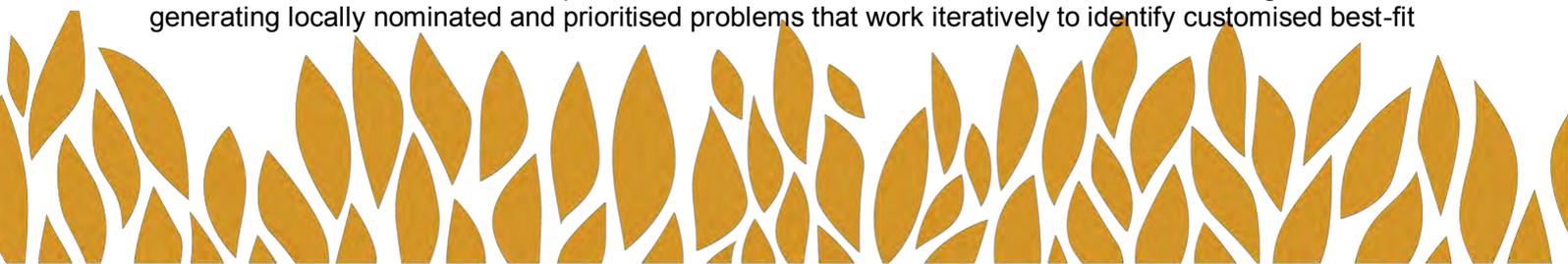
The speed at which activities are funded is important to the communities. A fast (**quick kick start**) response means the community members see action, not just talk. When activities are funded not long after decision-making, it reinforces the strength of the LCB and FP to get things done. Fast action strengthens their importance and the positive perception of the SCfC by community members and stakeholders.



A considered (**debated and researched**) response means that activities are well thought through to address sensitivities and barriers to service deliver. When there is more time to have dialogue with the broader community, it means the response to the problem is culturally reinforced and stakeholder-proofed. When there is more time to work with the QSSP to check the evidence to find proven approaches that work, it develops sound theories of change. Considered action may be slower, but it reinforces that the LCB and FP will do things the right way.

This means that sometimes funding is allocated for what might seem to be bandaid solutions, but this shows the community that action, not just talk, is happening. This builds momentum and trust that facilitates further discussions over a longer period and allows more considered responses to deeper causes of more complex problems. Tensions arose when SCfC contracts stipulated the funding that had to be spent within specific timeframes. Where contract managers are flexible and adaptable, it facilitates the fast and slow mechanisms in the pooled funding that help make SCfC work better.

An approach called problem-driven iterative adaptation suggests that rather than just picking up a toolkit of service solutions of best practice, decisions about what services to fund should begin with generating locally nominated and prioritised problems that work iteratively to identify customised best-fit



responses. There are three elements to problem-driven iterative adaptation: 1) detailed explanation of the problem (**well-defined community plans and activity plans**); 2) a pragmatic and supportable response (**deep stories for considered responses using evidence**); and 3) commitment to a social movement that can adopt and adapt it in practice (**fast and slow spending to show action not talk reinforced by social capital**).

The challenges for implementing a problem-driven iterative adaptation approach in the SCfC are the way that funding is distributed across the contract period. Front loading short-term (two-year contracts) or back loading (five-year contracts) or annual allocations create tensions that work against the strength of the program. When funds are able to be drawn in alignment with the problem-driven iterative process cycle rather than the financial year, activities better facilitate adaptive practices.

Place-based economic development

SCfC was designed to increase economic participation. An economic development strategy, or **placemaking**, also called place-based economic development, is the practice of using a community's public amenities or community-owned organisations to make economic progress. To successfully increase economic participation, SCfC needed to link jobs directly to the community, avoiding outsourced or remotely delivered services. This works where SCfC can stipulate local employment requirements in funding activities and/or services. Those FPs that harness the power of placemaking for local community-controlled organisations are enhancing the quality of outcomes from the activities, by improving the cultural competency of the service, and they are improving the value for money due to better coordination of services and attracting other outside investment from philanthropic or other jurisdictional funding. With support from FPs, more employment is possible. Challenges to having housing and office facilities available in communities meant some FPs could not be located locally limiting their ability to employ more local Aboriginal people.

"Getting local people jobs is more than delivering a service; it also goes a long way to fixing some of the community problems."
FP

The logic is simple: create a foundational base with SCfC to attract and retain innovators and job creators from other areas. Success breeds success, and communities with a successful SCfC program are attractive to others seeking to implement social programs using local staff. A significant outcome of the program is the ability to increase employment opportunities for local people either directly from SCfC funding or from opportunities arising from the SCfC's influence on other funders.

"We pay young ones on the programs and they now get paid to run those other programs. Probably worked with about 40 young ones. Also worked with Elders too." FP

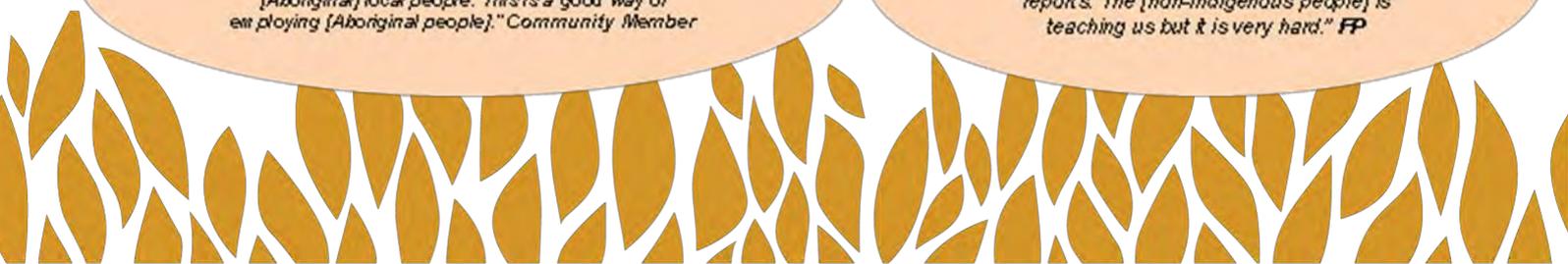
"[FP] employs parents to do the projects; they get up and find real jobs." FP

"We need to have more budget and opportunities to employ people for the program to continue." Community Member

"SCfC gives employment opportunities to [Aboriginal] people." FP

"Most programs were run by [non-Indigenous people], and not many jobs were given to [Aboriginal people]. But now it is run by the SCfC program, which is operated by [Aboriginal] local people. This is a good way of employing [Aboriginal people]." Community Member

"Reporting is really hard for me. I wouldn't know where to start. Some of the funding employs [non-Indigenous people] to write the reports. The [non-Indigenous people] is teaching us but it is very hard." FP



Key implications and take-home messages for why it works

When designing programs like the SCfC, **policymakers** need to know the boundaries/parameters and elements that facilitate better outcomes and those that inhibit success.

- Keep the key design elements without overprescribing what is to be done; let the organic nature of community development create how it is to be done their way, because every community is different.
- Be very clear on why the program needs to be done in the way it is done, and relax the red tape in government to make it easy and simple to administer. LCBs are volunteers who take on huge responsibilities that should not overburden them with administration.
- Allow the community, not political cycles and machinery of government changes, to drive the agenda. Find alignment between the community goals and government goals that are not prescriptive but which allow for adjustment from both community and government.
- Appreciate where the boundaries for funding modality, funding payments and investment specifications need to be flexible, adaptable and fluid to facilitate better decision-making and service delivery.

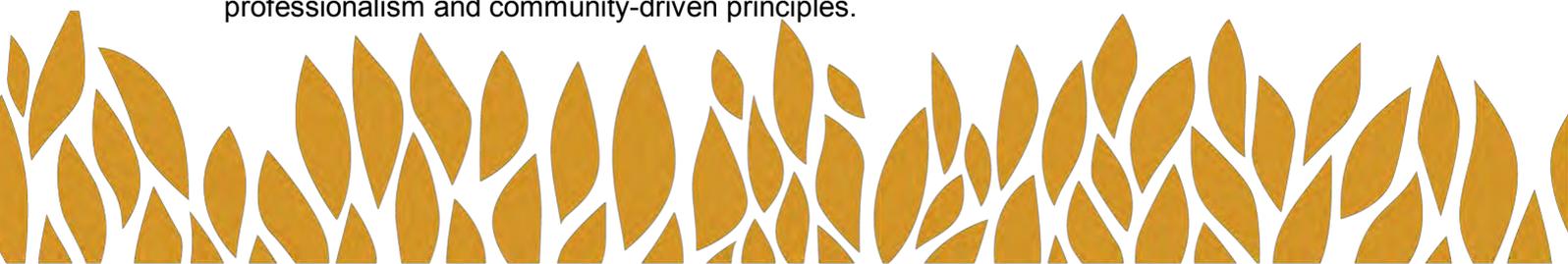
When taking responsibility for programs like the SCfC, **Local Community Boards** need to respect all the accountabilities.

- Use the concepts of collective impact and gather as much advice and guidance from as many sources as possible to make informed decisions about how it will be done to best achieve better outcomes. This includes drawing on both worlds, modern and traditional.
- Be transparent and accountable to everyone in the community. This is often achieved when all clan groups or language groups are represented on the LCB and there is good communication with all community stakeholders.
- Recruit and mentor younger members of the LCB so that community memory is kept strong and the burden of volunteering is shared. This will increase the sustainability of community-led decision-making in the future.

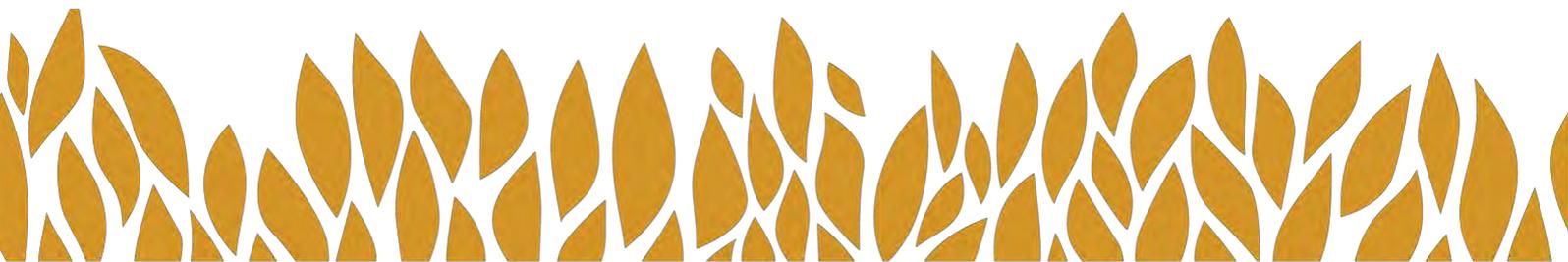
*We don't get the chance to talk at meetings. The older people tell us to be quiet and so we don't get to tell what we think. We know what young people are feeling. Be our responsibility one day." **Community Youth***

When contracted to implement and support programs like the SCfC, **Facilitating Partners and the Quality Service Support Panel** need to know their roles in mediating the intercultural space between all parties.

- The FP and QSSP are clear that their performance is managed by LCBs and PMC. LCBs are volunteers who need support, but they are also monitoring FP performance to deliver on the commitment they have made to their community. The FP must be strong and trusted by LCBs.
- The FP coordinator's role is to navigate the space between the traditional world and the modern world, eventually working their way out of the job by increasing the capacity of local Aboriginal people to fill the position. Controlling this space by gatekeeping or coveting the role limits the outcomes of SCfC. The FP staff need to navigate complex space between cultures in difficult implementation environments. Each FP structure is different, so staffing and roles vary in each community. A great deal of skill is required to maintain professionalism and community-driven principles.



- Mediating the intercultural space also means the FPs and the QSSP make all parties accountable to each other for the answers to the questions: Is this the best possible way to solve this problem? Have we got the right people doing it in the right way? How will we know when goals are achieved or otherwise?

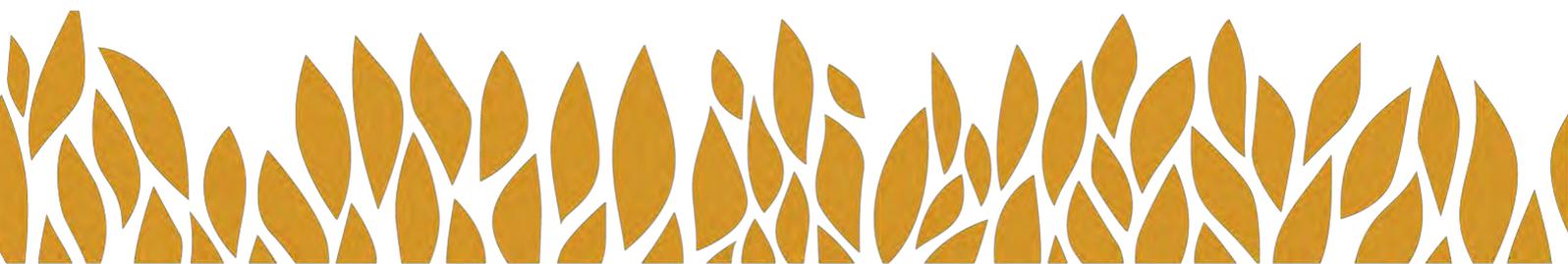


5. What has been done?

This section describes the data reviewed from the online survey of FPs, the community plans, activity plans and performance reports. Qualitative data and verbatim comments have been included to support and explain the descriptive analysis. Graphs and tables with more detail are included in Appendix C.

Local Community Boards

As at 30 June 2017, there were 195 community members volunteering their time to participate on the LCBs. The FPs provided performance statistics about the LCBs to PMC, but qualitative findings from FPs suggested that these figures did not reflect the outcomes or impact of the program from their perspective. Rather than demonstrating performance, these statistics may be best used to understand context. The number of members of an LCB is not an indicator that the LCB is functioning at a higher capacity or making better decisions. In some communities, a small consistent group were making good decisions. In Utopia the LCB is growing and currently has 87 members, representing all major outstations and family groups within the Utopia region. The inclusive attitude towards group membership means that there is greater involvement in the decision-making process. The Tranche I sites commenced in 2013 however performance reports provided to the evaluation started in 2015. The Tranche II sites started in 2015 and started providing performance reports in 2015 and 2016.



LCB Members by Community

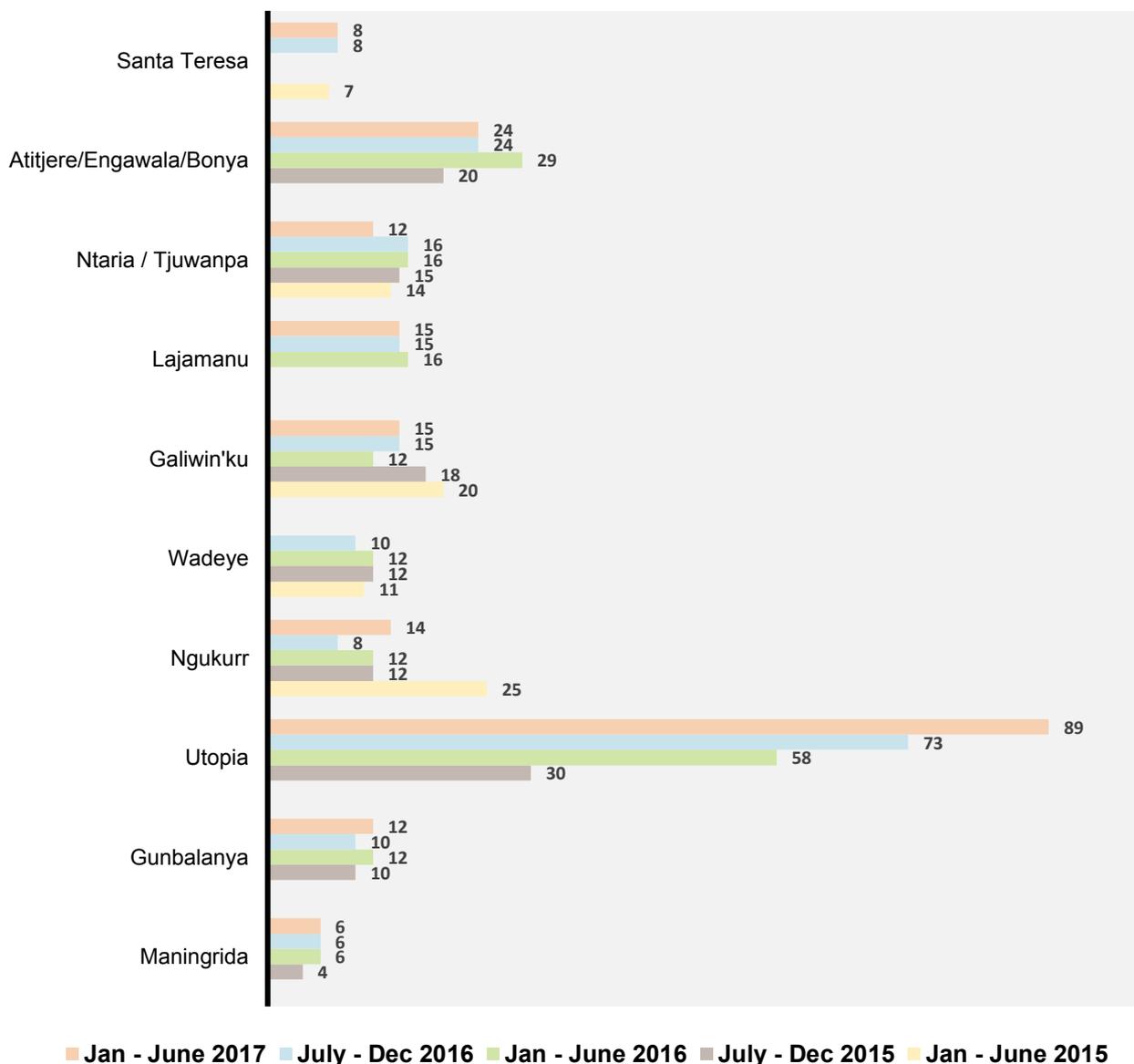
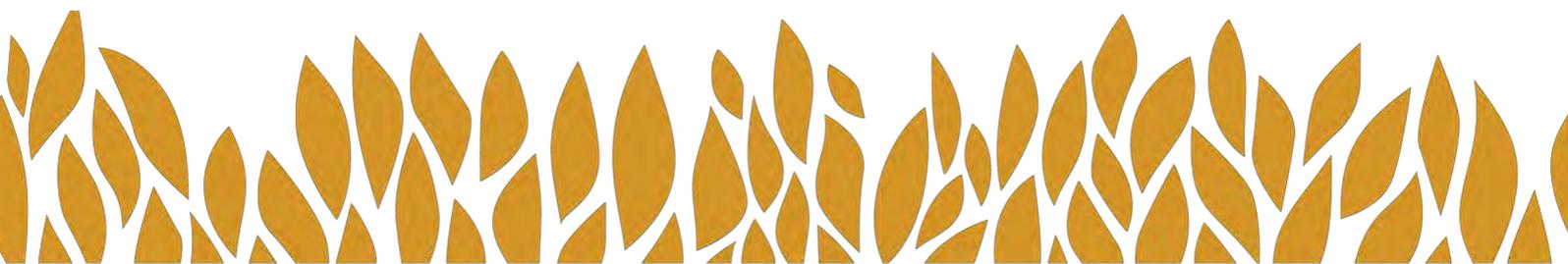


Figure 3: Number of LCB members by community
 Note: Missing data for Wadeye (Jan–June 2017) and Santa Teresa (July 2015 – June 2016).

Qualitative data suggest that more diversity of LCB members is needed, particularly across ages and gender to better represent the community and bring ideas from the target cohorts for planning activities; however, it is more important that all clan groups, family groups or language groups who live in the community are represented. The structures governed by cultural lore are far stronger than modern interpretations of what a governance system or structure for a strong LCB should look like. Where LCBs draw on all members of the community through their cultural obligations and respect to Elders, decisions are seen to be made **the right way**. If decisions are made the right way, then services funded are supported, families are engaged and activities are more successful overall. Where LCBs do not have good representation and/or good communication through the cultural reporting lines of different families, then decisions are sometimes questioned, misinterpreted or not supported. The



community plans and other performance documentation do not always indicate the age and gender nor the clan groups of the LCB.

Where LCBs are set up the right way, it facilitates healing of old conflicts in the community. It was said to have brought people together through a common goal for children and young people. When the LCB includes all families working together, the SCfC was said to contribute to social cohesion. This social cohesion is essential for creating safe places to make decisions and it is building social capital in the community. In the knowledge-sharing workshops, the LCBs felt that one of the key learnings of the SCfC was building relationships: with government, with stakeholders and within their communities.

"For this project, there are a strong team of leaders from different tribal groups. They stand on behalf of the community and negotiate with the SCfC program – it is very empowering for the community." **Community Stakeholder**

"Strong women from each language/clan group, they come together and work together."
Service Provider

Employment outcomes

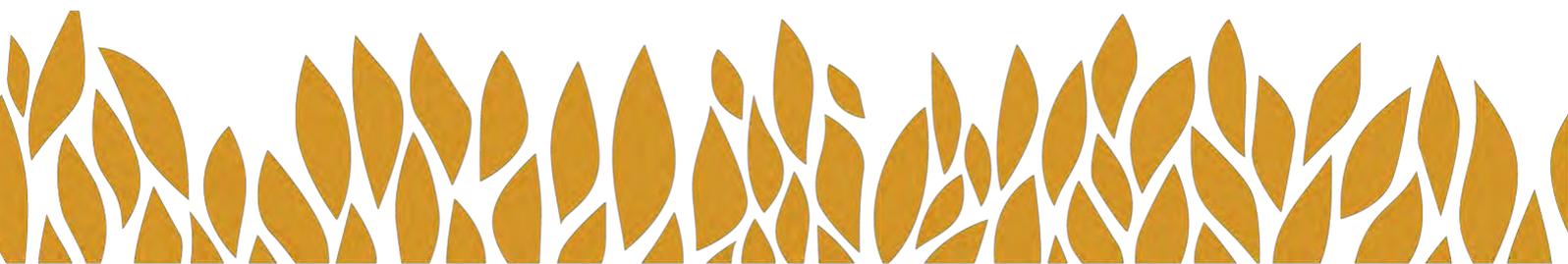
At the end of June 2017, the FPs reported to PMC that there was a workforce of 309 employees who were directly paid through SCfC funding (note: Wadeye data were missing). Of this workforce, 76% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. The statistics do not include other employment resulting from funding services or activities or collaboration with other partners. LCBs are made up of people in voluntary positions. The number of people employed by SCfC varied by community over time as activities increased or as the workforce was required. Some communities had a lot of short-term activity positions associated with their initiatives. Not all positions are full time or permanent. There is anecdotal evidence and qualitative discussion that Aboriginal positions are more likely to be casual part/time, whereas non-Indigenous positions are more likely to be full time.

The qualitative findings indicated that the increased employment opportunities for local communities are highly valued by the LCBs, not just by government, and are a key determinant in their decision-making around service delivery options. Delivering services locally with local providers and local staff is considered more culturally appropriate, more effective in delivering quality, more efficient and better value for money.

"Many young people are employed to do the work."
Community Stakeholder

"When this new project started people in the community heard that there were many positions to be apply, so most Yolngu people wrote application to get a job through the SCfC program."
Community Stakeholder

"Since having both sexes employed [to run the program] attendance has picked up. [Kids] stay there and parents come too."
Service Provider



Number of Employees by Community

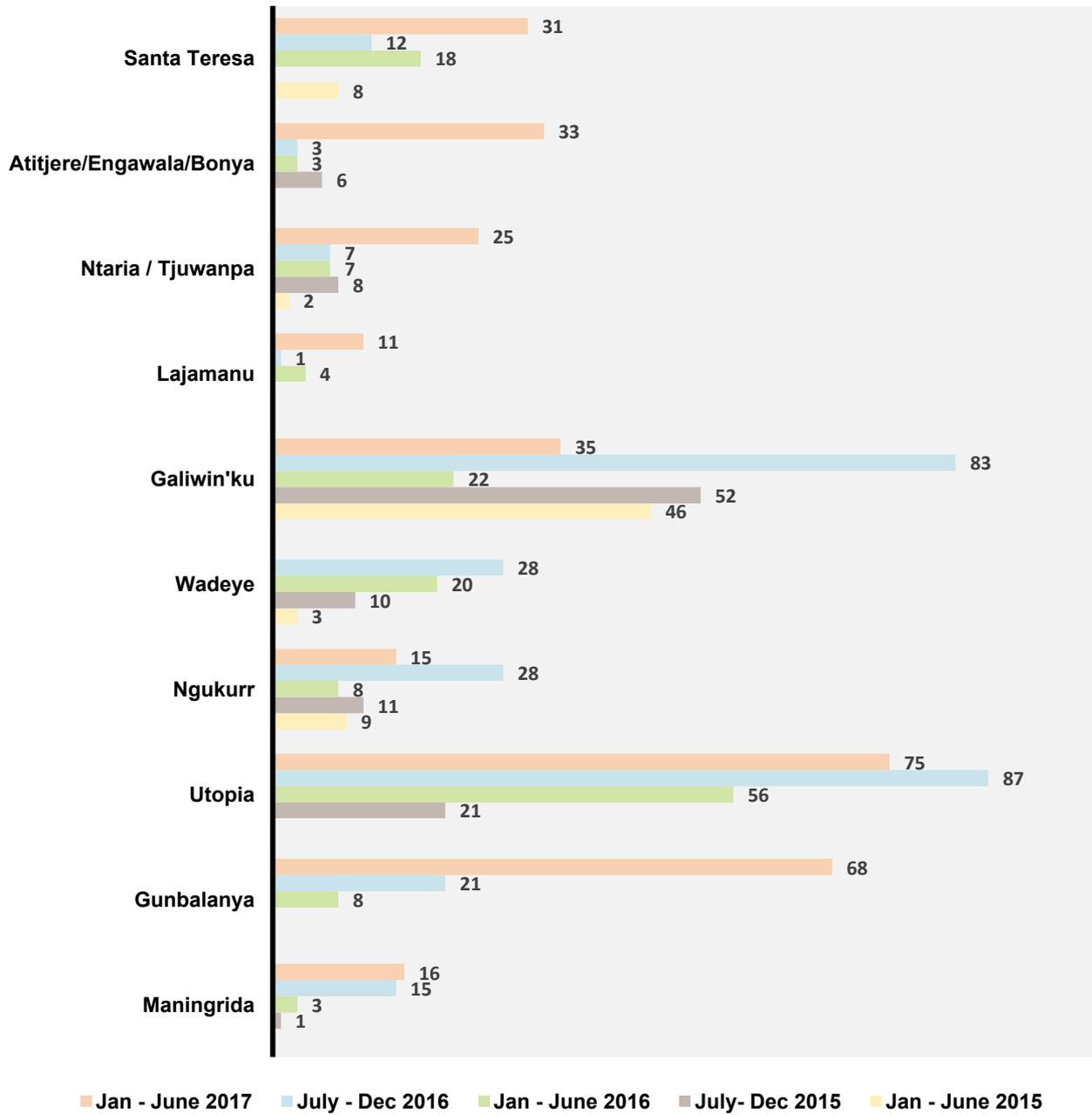
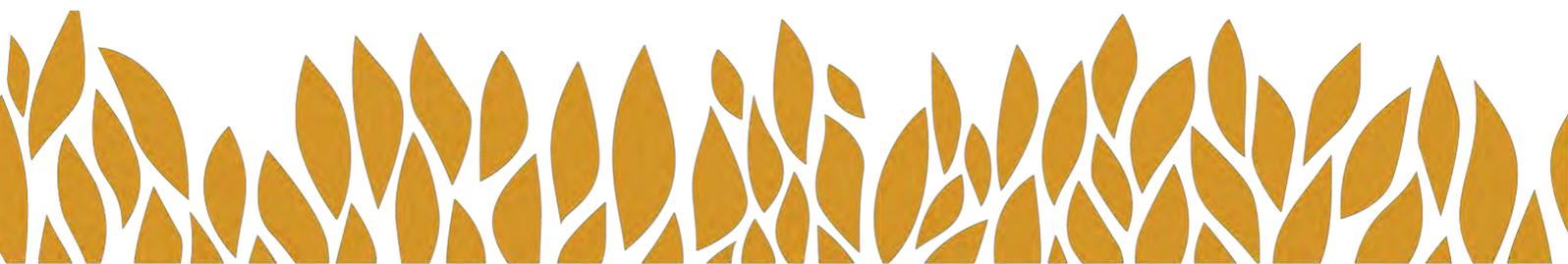


Figure 4: Number of employees by community
 Note: Missing data for Wadeye (Jan–June 2017).



Employees by Aboriginal status (%)

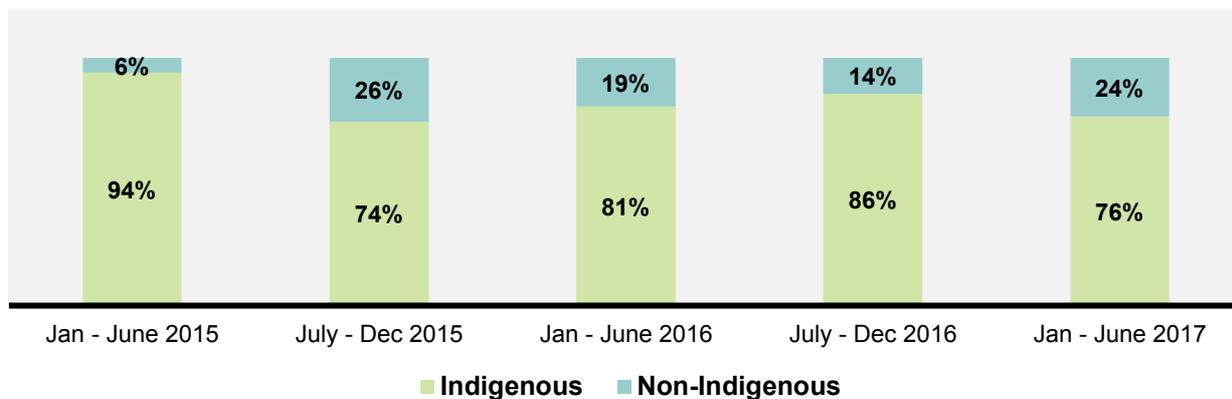


Figure 5: Percentage of employees by Aboriginal status

Community plans

The early implementation stage of the SCfC included the development of a community plan. For some communities, this was a relatively straightforward process; others required more time and more dialogue across the community to create a vision that everyone supported. Once the community members were aligned, the LCBs and the FPs had to submit the community plan so PMC could review it for alignment to the government vision of the program (Table 2). Where the FPs were more skilled in what they called ‘govvy speak’, the more the vision of the community showed alignment with the investment strategy of the SCfC. Where the FPs were either less skilled in govvy speak or less likely to change the wording or the vision of the community, the more likely PMC would be to request changes and revisions to the plan.

*“From the design point of view, the program has been designed well. They have had good local consultation and are driven by the local community. The process for funding in general is more straightforward. It’s a much simpler process and that has a lot to do with the provider.” **Service Provider***

Community plans are often written in the Aboriginal language of the community, using words, terms and phrases that resonate locally. It is extremely important that this is not altered or adjusted, otherwise the plan loses meaning, significance and community ownership. The challenge for FPs is to navigate the intercultural space between what community eloquently articulate and what government needs for its investment rationale without diminishing the integrity of the community plan. Where they can articulate it in Aboriginal ways of knowing and align it strategically, it is more likely to be owned by community and supported by government.

Where contract managers trust the FP and the LCB and have good local knowledge, they are more likely to better understand and support the community plan. Where contract managers are risk averse, new to the region or have little local knowledge of the community, they are less trusting and more likely to scrutinise the community plan.

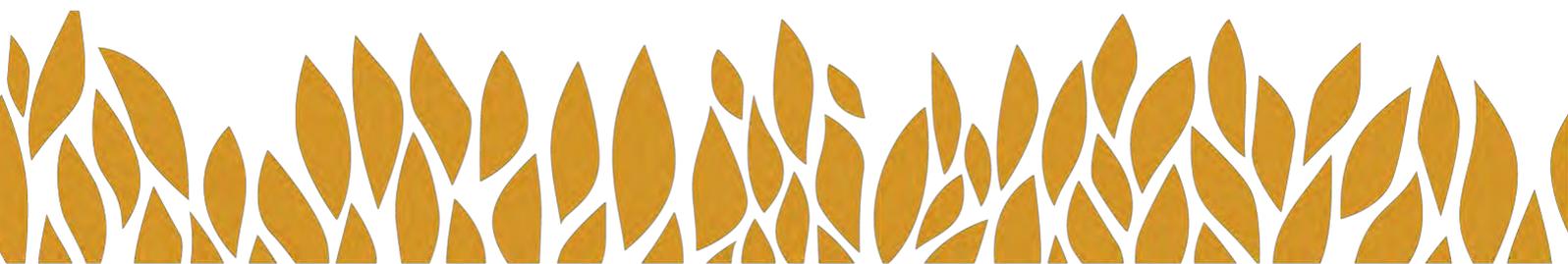


Table 2: Number of revisions of the community plan by community

This table provides an overview of the number of revisions each community plan required.	
Community	Number of times the first version of the community plan needed revision
Ntaria	1
Utopia Homelands	0
Gunbalanya	Unknown
Ngukurr	7
Wadeye	Unknown
Lajamanu	10
Galiwin'ku	1
Santa Teresa	0
Maningrida	1
Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya)	Not available (missing data)

The early stages of the SCfC implementation held many challenges for developing the community plan and getting momentum for the program to commence delivering services. For seven communities, housing for FP staff was a big challenge. During the development and planning of SCfC, communities were advised that funding of \$600,000 was available for staff accommodation in each site (doubling as office accommodation, where appropriate). This funding was not provided after machinery of government changes in 2013, leading to some FPs struggling to recruit appropriately skilled staff and maintain a physical presence in their communities as originally envisaged.

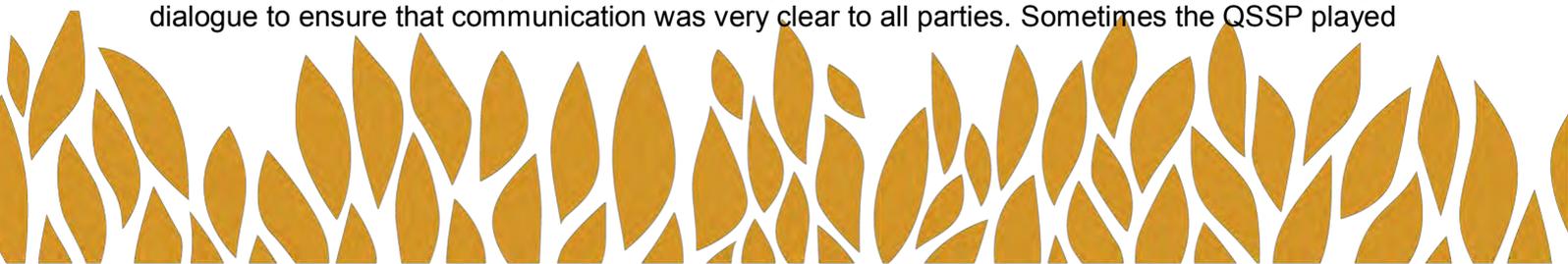
The former Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs established a Capacity Building Unit to provide and fund capacity building in potential SCfC sites. However, only three potential SCfC organisations were involved in the capacity building, and only two of those were contracted as FPs. Additional capacity-building activities that were originally envisaged in the model were not implemented.

It was said in the qualitative research to be extremely important to have local FP coordinators in community working with the LCBs to drive the process of creating the community plan. But where there were housing restrictions, FP access to community was not constant and this decreased the spontaneity, opportunity for deep and meaningful discussions and ongoing dialogue through this phase. Another challenge was access to an operations space. The qualitative discussions indicated that there was too much bureaucracy involved to access existing infrastructure, or simply no common sense when multiple jurisdictions were involved in the management of assets or resources to maximise their utility.

"In the future SCfC should be run by locals and have its own building based in the community."
Community Stakeholder

Where strong governance structures existed, the formation of the LCB was less challenging even if the existing structure was not used but supported a new structure. Taking the time to make sure the structure is right and formed the right way was said in the qualitative discussions to be vital; this often means incorporating appropriate cultural structures of governance into the 'western' governance style of the contractual arrangement. There were also challenges in getting the right people onto the LCB board and contracting the right FP to work with the community.

While there were challenges, it was generally acknowledged that getting everyone (LCB, FP, PMC, community members) to support the community plan was achieved with time, trust and ongoing dialogue to ensure that communication was very clear to all parties. Sometimes the QSSP played



a role in mediating this process. Where the FP had staff turnover or lacked capacity, the QSSP assisted until they could rebuild and/or replace their staff. The QSSP role was often a tenuous position between the parties, requiring expert negotiation skills to bring everyone back to focusing on the SCfC.

The qualitative discussions indicated that a two-speed approach was required. It took a slow process to get the right foundation in place, but fast action was needed to get traction and momentum to demonstrate that activity was happening, not just a lot of talk, and that seeing supported believing. The community members did not always trust that PMC was going to honour the intent of SCfC and allow them to lead the decision-making. Quick actions and activities that happened soon after the decision were made built community trust and confidence in the LCB and FP. Where there were delays in getting these activities operating, it really challenged the perception in the community of the program. Where PMC did not support decisions, it created distrust in the LCB for government.

"The SCfC approached us. They'd heard about the program that was already running, and it was pretty much what they wanted us to do through that program. This allowed the program to get bigger."
Program Provider

"The current model has a great deal of flexibility in the way it is able to engage with the community. Key activities and the space are priorities. Activities are identified/negotiated by the community." **Stakeholder**

Number of occurrences of challenges in developing the community plan

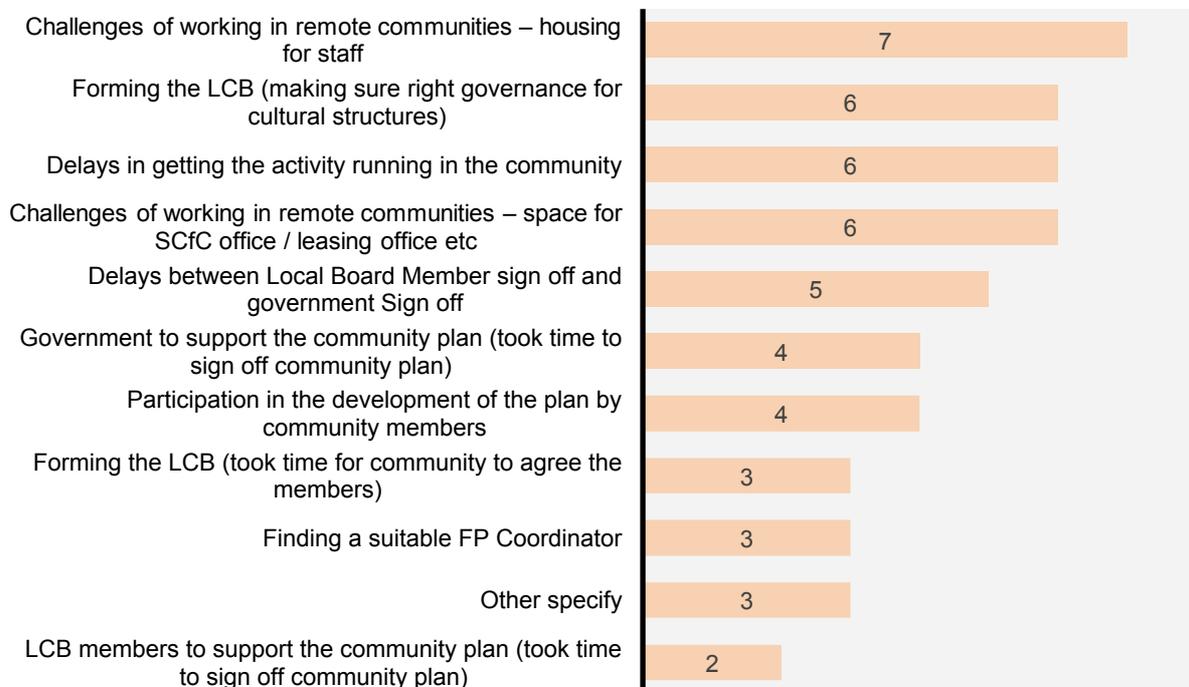
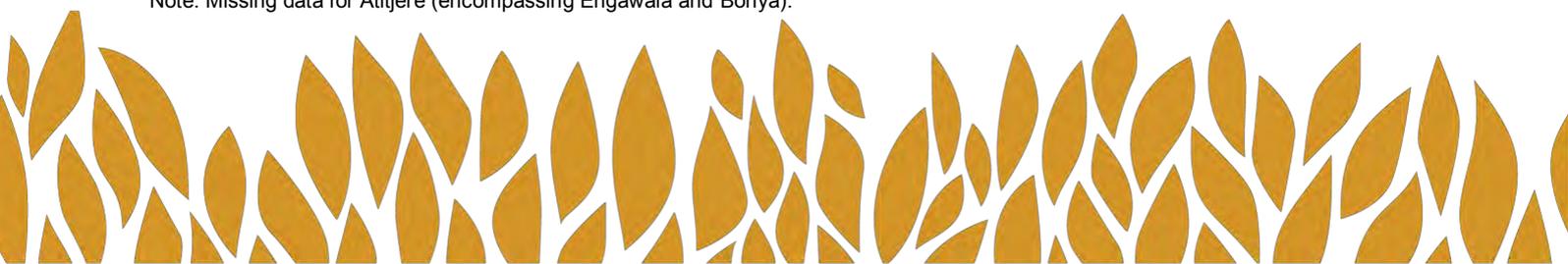
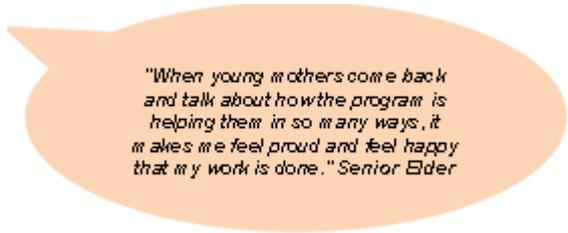


Figure 6: Number of occurrences of challenges in developing the community plan
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).



The eight communities that responded to this question felt that finalising their community plan had been an achievement in LCB members working together with community stakeholders, partners and the FP; community-led decision-making; community ownership; and community pride. They felt proud when the community plans acknowledged that the strength of the community was in their local knowledge, that they knew best how to help their own community and their cultural knowledge was supported.



Having a community vision documented in the community plan gives direction not only to the LCB and FP but also to other stakeholders and service providers in the community, who now better understand what the community needs and wants. The community plan creates a common goal that can be used to start discussions, create opportunities and leverage ideas.

A lot of effort went into the creation of the community plans. This effort did not go unnoticed by community members. When the LCB were hardworking and motivated, it demonstrated to the community that they really cared about making the community a better place, and that they were determined to focus on the outcomes of families and their children and young people. When the vision for the future was strong, it created optimism and a sense that there was a way that local people could influence and create change, their way.

Number of occurrences of achievements for SCfC when the community plan was finalised



Figure 7: Number of occurrences of achievements for SCfC when the community plan was finalised
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya) and Gunbalanya.



Activities

There were 126 activities across nine communities. Tranche I sites had more than double the activities of Tranche II sites, due to the longer time they had been in the program.

Number of activities per community

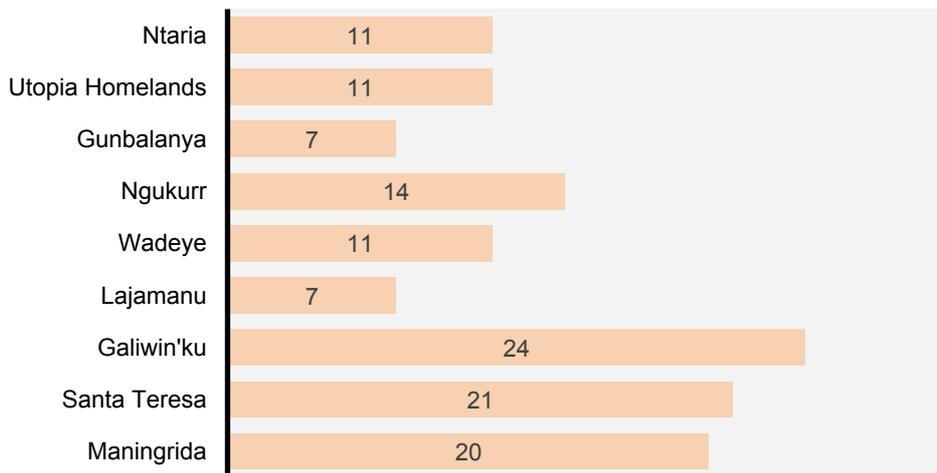


Figure 8: Number of activities per community
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

Activity plans are submitted to PMC for review and support. Almost half (45%) have not needed revision; 6% required one revision; 6% required two revisions; 5% required three revisions; 1% required four revisions. When revisions are required, it is often to reframe the activity plan to suit the language of government.

Proportion of activities by the number of times they had to be revised

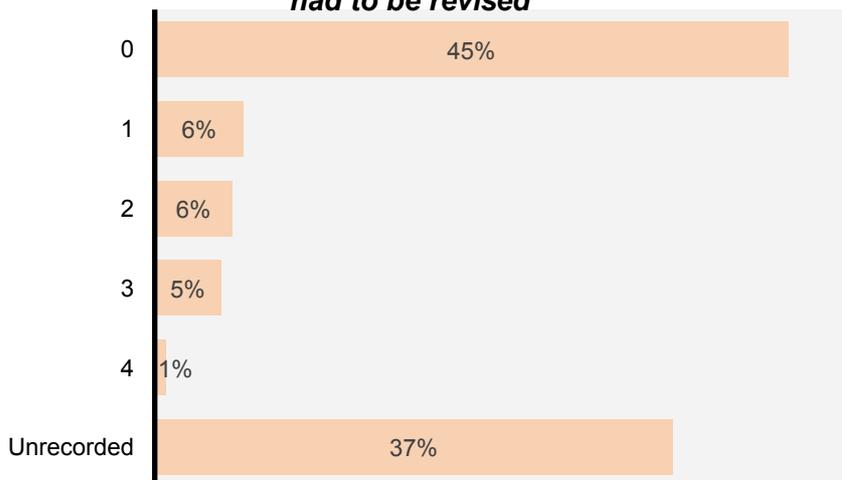
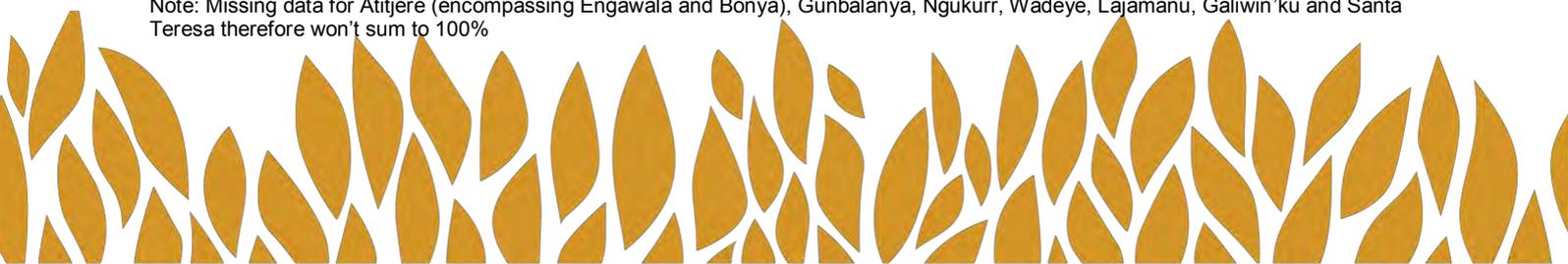


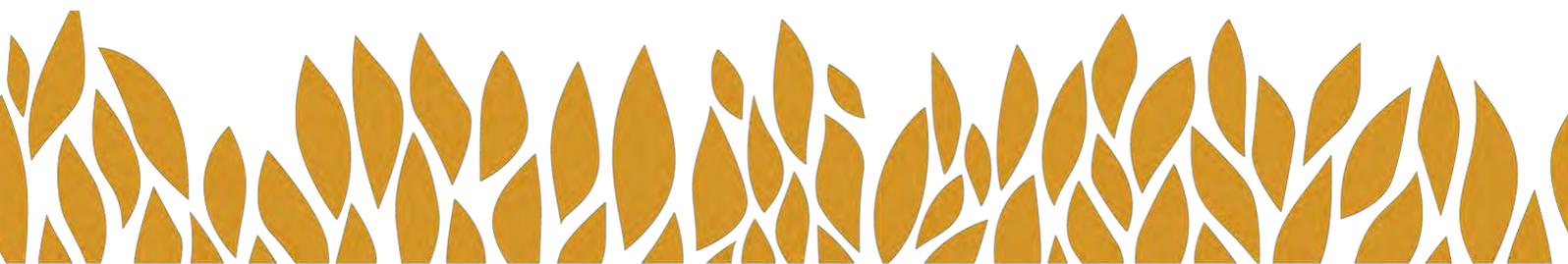
Figure 9: Proportion of activities by number of revisions
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya), Gunbalanya, Ngukurr, Wadeye, Lajamanu, Galiwin'ku and Santa Teresa therefore won't sum to 100%



The review process created some tensions and misunderstandings. LCBs felt that PMC did not trust them to wisely spend the funding they had been allocated. PMC wanted to be sure that the funding was being spent on goals that aligned with the investment intention, or they questioned value for money or duplication of other programs/funding jurisdictions. Revisions also created tensions between the FPs and the LCBs. Some LCBs felt that the FPs were changing the words of the plans behind their back so that they lost their meaning and thus lost their strength. The level of English language and literacy and knowledge that LCBs had of how government works reflected the extent to which these tensions arose. Some FPs overcame these problems by creating a matrix to 'translate' what community and government each wanted in their own words. Those FPs that could mediate this space created trust between the LCB and PMC and were more successful in having activities accepted without review. The need for review also varied depending on the regional contract manager's interpretation of the SCfC funding guidelines and the trust they had in the FP. LCBs experienced frustration when one community was funded for a particular activity but another community had to change the plan to get funding for a similar activity for example the Families and Schools Together (FAST).



A vast range of different types of activities were undertaken, each of them having underlying logic driving different outcomes. Coding these activities to one area was difficult due to their multifaceted nature, but the code used was the specified 'prime feature' of the activity as outlined in the activity plan. The prime feature may have been used as a 'means to an end' that is a way to get a different desired outcome. For example, activities that appeared to be a nutrition program with health and wellbeing outcomes were specifically designed for social cohesion, or after school activities incorporating skill development or school attendance were diversionary programs to reduce antisocial behaviour or conflict and fighting. Therefore, the prime feature was not the only outcome achieved, and often many other benefits resulted by running the activity. Only a small number of programs directly addressed safety problems, yet community members' perceptions, as discussed in the qualitative data, were that their communities were safer. Figure 10 summarises the activities by their prime feature and not all the benefits or outcomes that may have been achieved.



Prime feature of the SCfC funded activities

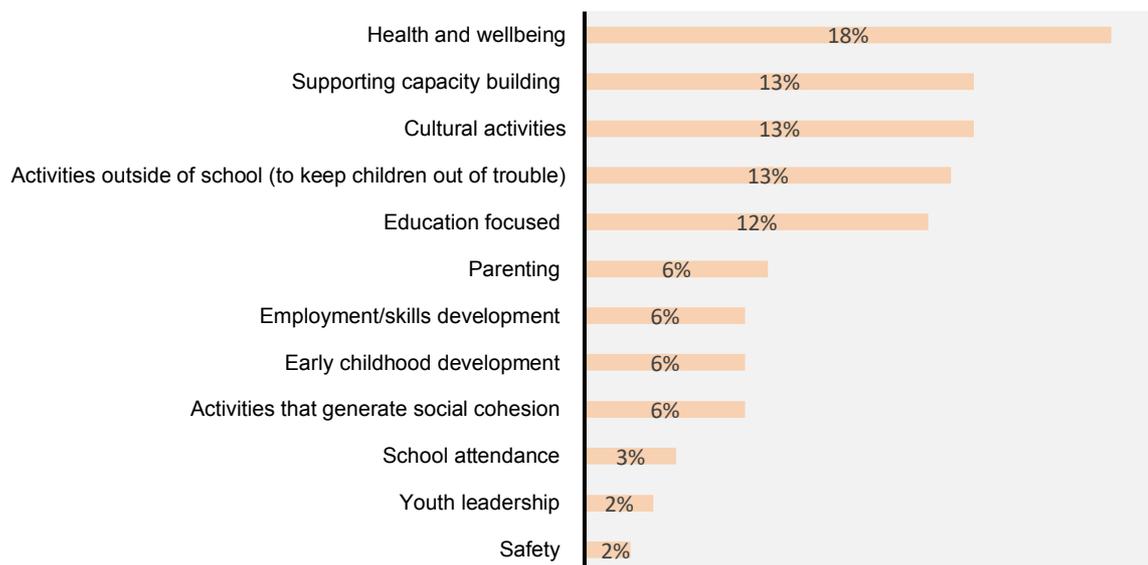


Figure 10: Prime feature of the SCfC-funded activities
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

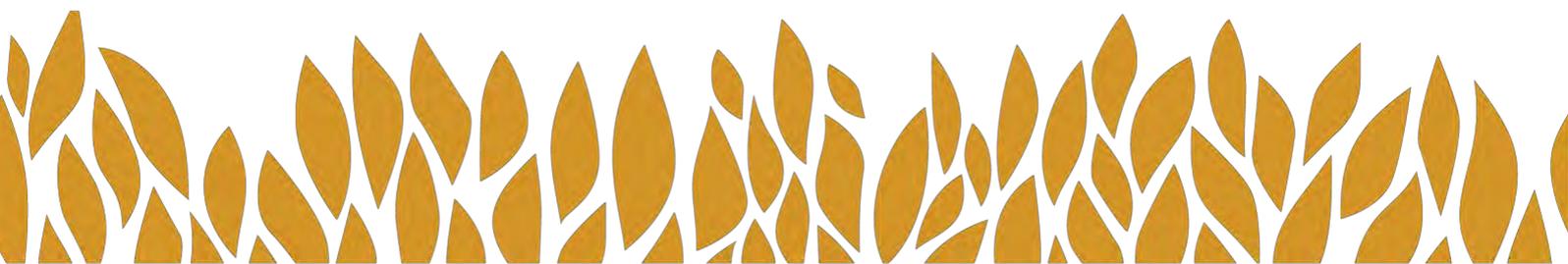
Health and wellbeing has been identified as an important issue for communities receiving SCfC funding, with 18% of all activities delivered focused on improving the health and wellbeing of community members. These activities are varied and include the Young Women’s Room, Hope for Health, Hospital Survival Kits and the Youth and Wellbeing Program.

Supporting capacity building in the delivery of the SCfC program is necessary to ensure that the program is effective in reaching its desired outcomes. Many communities engaged in these activities, with 13% of all SCfC-funded activities supporting capacity building. These activities include LCB Governance Training and Development, On-Ground Support Program and a Rapid Response Fund.

Cultural activities are extremely important to community members, as they provide children with the opportunity to learn about cultural traditions. Cultural education and experiences are the focus of 13% of activities; they include School Bush Trips, Chasing the Music and the Njanjma Jnr Ranger program.

"The language centre was also involved in the program. They came in and were teaching kids Marra language. We had a couple of European kids too who were doing really well with it too." Elder

"The book program is making books. Learning animal names, place names, parts of the body. It's just like we do with English but done in language. Trying to teach kids both ways, not just in English. There's been an improvement and increase in kids going to school." Senior Elder and LCB member, Female



Many communities receiving SCfC funding expressed concern with the quantity and quality of **activities available for children outside of school hours**, which are important as they keep children entertained and out of trouble. Of the SCfC-funded activities, 13% are out of school hours/school holiday programs and include school holiday programs, Christmas holiday activities, skateboard workshops, family fun days and kids clubs.

*"We like playing the games here. And we get hotdogs too." **Young After School Activity***

*"Coming to discos. That's my favourite thing. I like coming here after school too." **Eleven-year-old at After School Activity***

*"I like coming here to play. Colouring and watching TV. Cartoons are my favourite." **Eight-year-old at After School Activity***

Education-focused activities make up 12% of activities delivered through SCfC funding.

Activities are varied by community and include computer training, study tours, education in social media use and school-ready kids. Educational activities deliver increase employment opportunities for community members.

*"Computer training is good. Good for the kids. They need to go to school. Learn these things, for their work, for their future." **Senior Elder***

*"Some of the old men want to learn so they can get a better understanding of the Land Rights. They also want to show the young people that it's okay to learn to read and write." **Learning Centre staff member***

*"That cooking program, that one was a good one. Got men into cooking and learning about good food for families." **Senior Elder***

Parenting programs are the focus of 6% of activities under SCfC. Examples include Keeping Our Kids Safe, Fathers Playgroup and Safe4Kids.

Employment is a key issue raised by several communities receiving SCfC funding. Activities with this focus aim to provide community members with new skills to increase employment opportunities and are 6% of all activities delivered. They include the AAC music program, Mo Ninjas and the BaBoom music and wellbeing program.

*"The Teaching Assistants should have that training more through their jobs. They could use those skills for teaching and learning." **Senior Elder***

Early childhood development is a focus for many communities receiving SCfC funding, and these activities make up 6% of all activities. They include FaFT playgroup leaders, FaFT Baby Food project and BabyFAST.

The main focus of 6% of activities is to generate **social cohesion** among the community. These activities include the Yolngu Seasons or Yalu Men's program, the Men's Yarning Circle, Cooking for Safe Communities, Cooking and Nutrition Education, Cooking for Vulnerable Families, Men's Shed and the Lajamanu Clean Up Day. These activities often serve a dual purpose, providing community members with the opportunity to learn new skills, socialise and build social relationships.

Youth self-determination and leadership were recognised as issues and were the focus of 2% of activities. The Youth Leadership and Development Music and Visual Art Project activities provide community members with the opportunity to learn new skills and participate in community arts management.

Safety-focused activities total 2% of all programs. The Women’s Safe Place is an SCfC-funded activity addressing the issue of domestic violence in Galiwin’ku.

Of the 126 activity plans submitted, 36% (49) have been completed, 52% (62) are in progress, 11% (13) are approved but not yet started, none are awaiting approval and 1% (2) are in the preparation/review process.

Phase of activities (%)

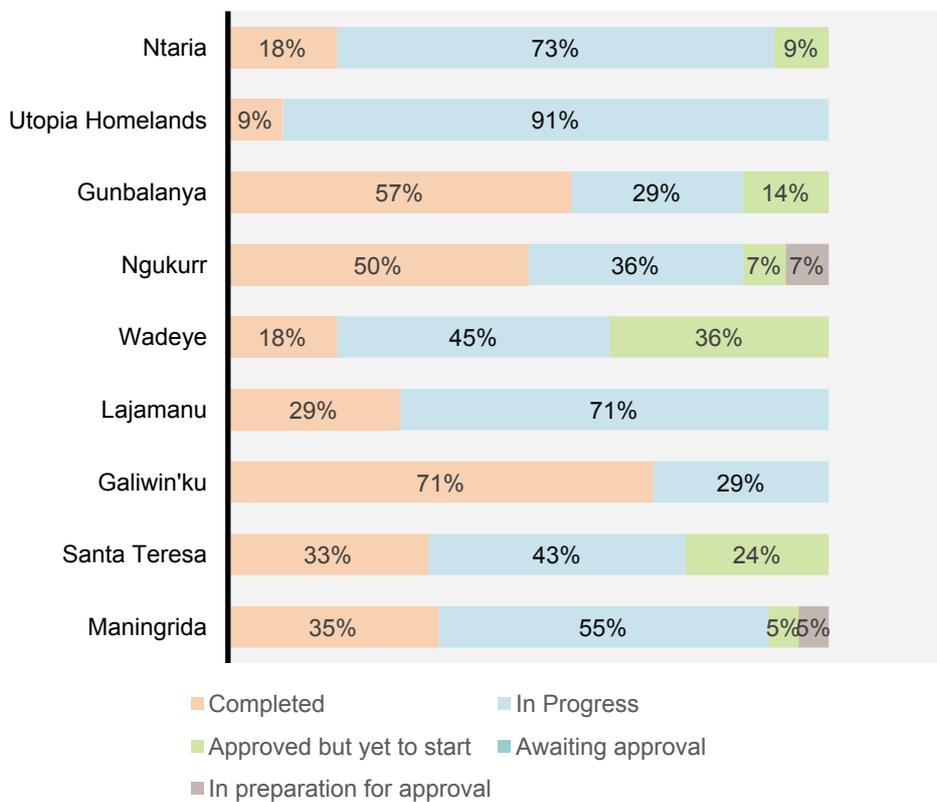
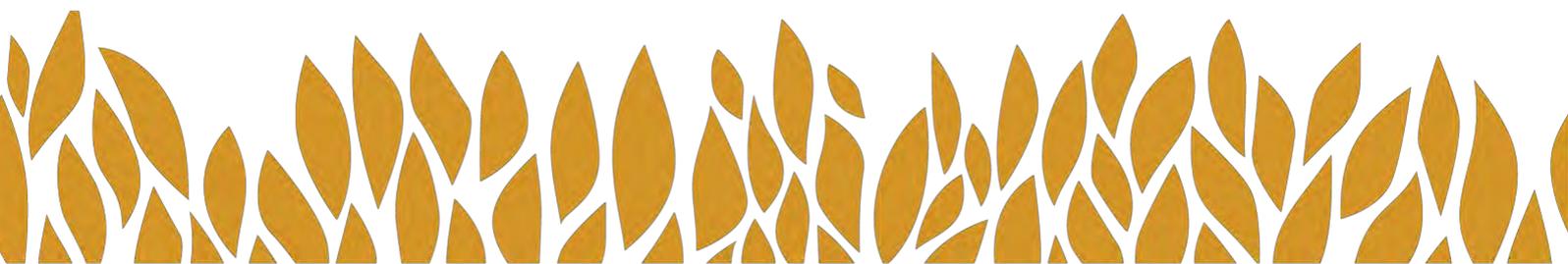


Figure 11: Phase of activities
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).



There were 47 activities that were re-funded and repeated. Galiwin'ku created six-month activity plans so they could review and adjust activities depending on whether they were working or not; 15 were deemed worthy of continuation. Other repeated activities tended to be one-off events that occurred several times over the program lifetime (i.e. bush camps, festivals, cultural activities, cooking and nutrition courses). Across communities, around one-third of activities were funded more than once.

Proportion of activities that were funded more than once

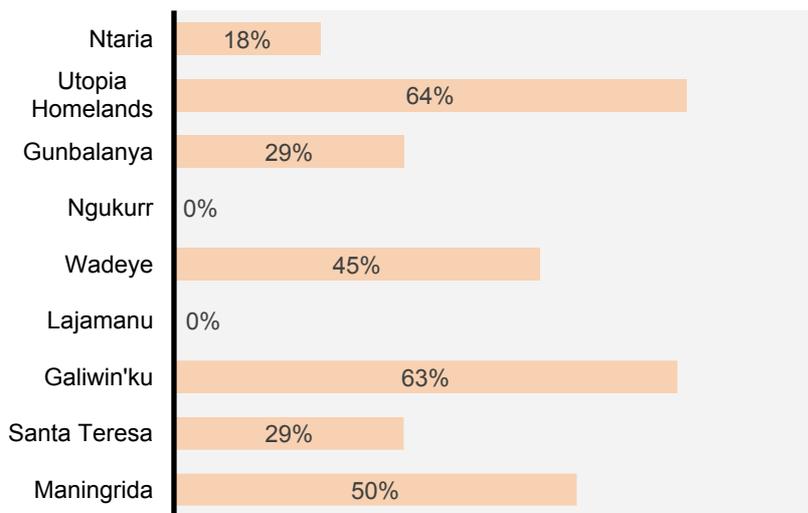
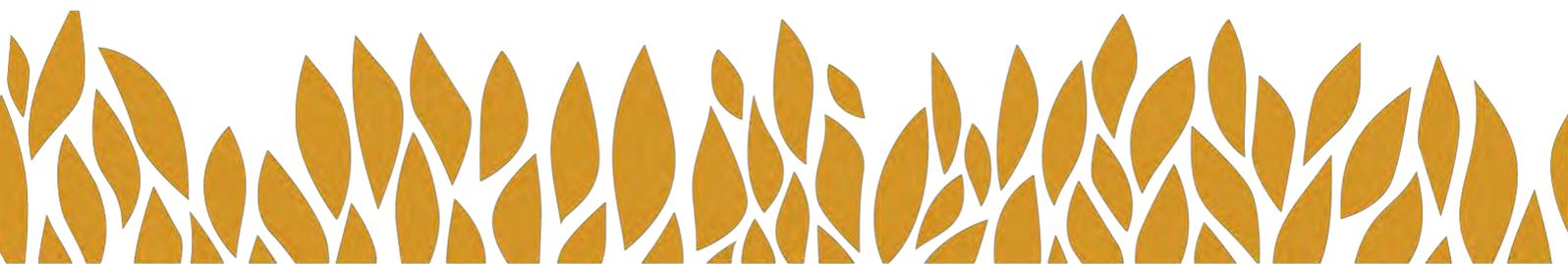


Figure 12: Proportion of activities funded more than once
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).



The average number of times activities were funded was three, with a maximum of 15 times in Maningrida for the School Attendance activities.

Average number of times activities were funded, for those which were funded more than once

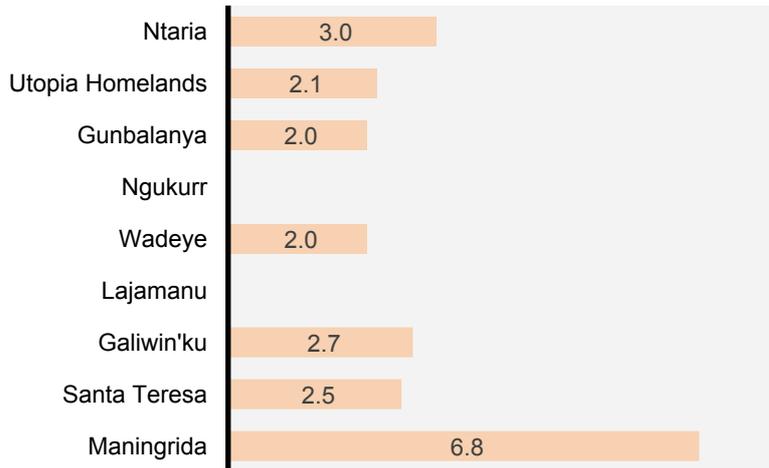
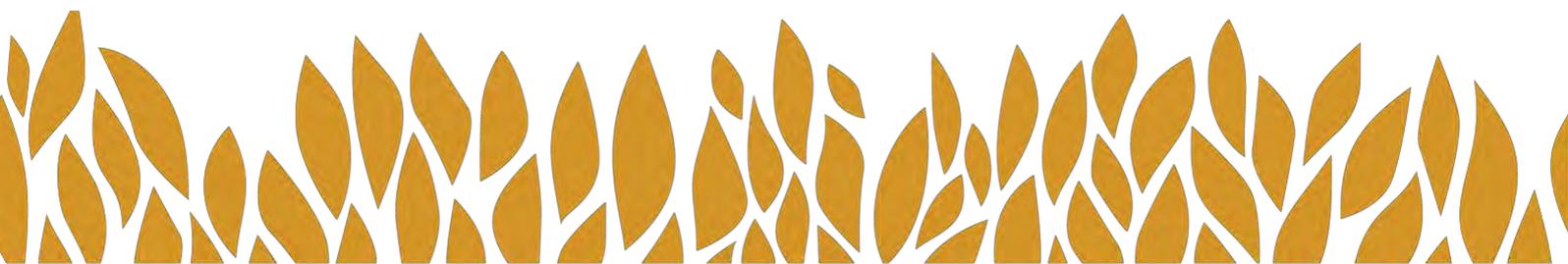


Figure 13: Average number of times activities funded (for those funded more than once)
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

There are 19 activities that were previously run in the communities that are now fully funded by SCfC. Some LCBs stated that they used their past experience and knowledge about previous programs to make decisions about re-funding programs. If the LCBs feel that the community values these activities and that they are effective, the SCfC is a good funding vehicle to reinstate good work. There are 14 activities where SCfC provides top-up funding to another service provider or program in the community. Some of the LCBs identified when programs or services needed additional support to be effective. Funds are better utilised where the FP collaborates well with other providers. There were 89 activities that had not been run before in the communities, and in three cases it was unknown if the activity had operated before or not.



Community activities funded by SCfC (%)

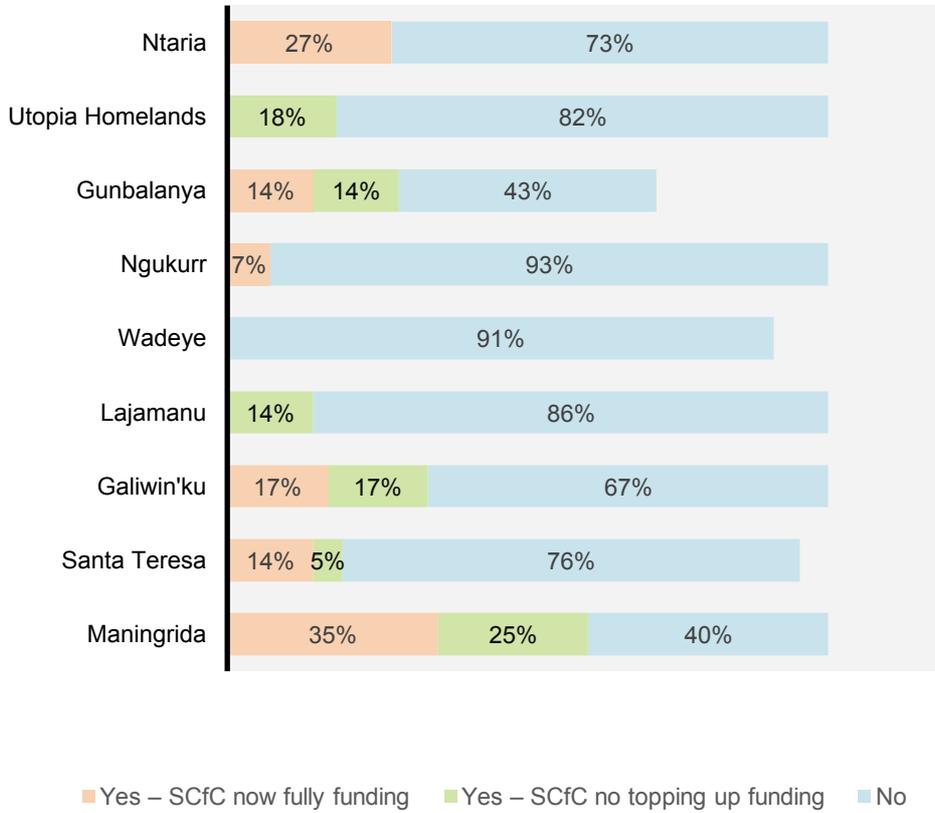
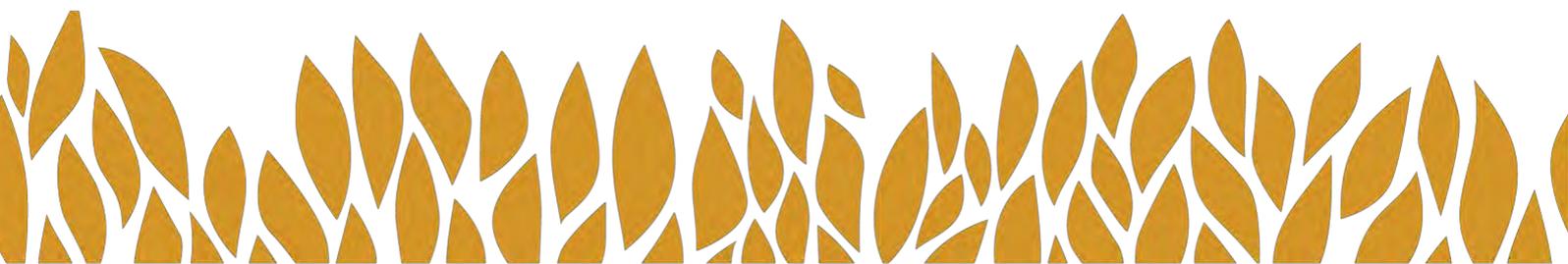


Figure 14: SCfC activity funding by community
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

Overall, half (51%) the activities face logistics challenges in providing services in remote communities. A quarter of the activities have challenges with delays. The qualitative data suggested that getting the right people at the right time to deliver services the way the community want them delivered is a challenge but also one of the major achievements of the SCfC. There were challenges in identifying how activity outcomes would be measured for evaluation and in getting activities supported by PMC.



Proportion of occurrences of challenges in line with activities

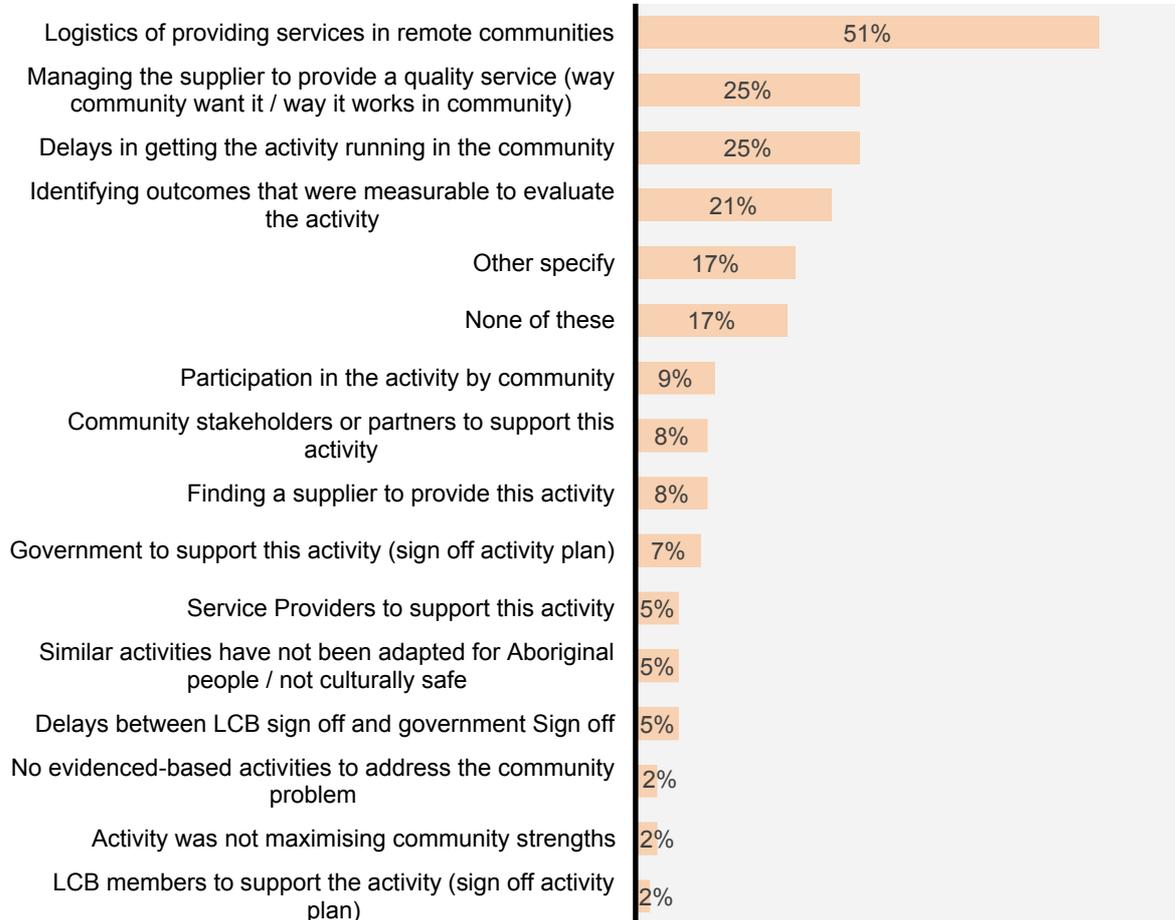
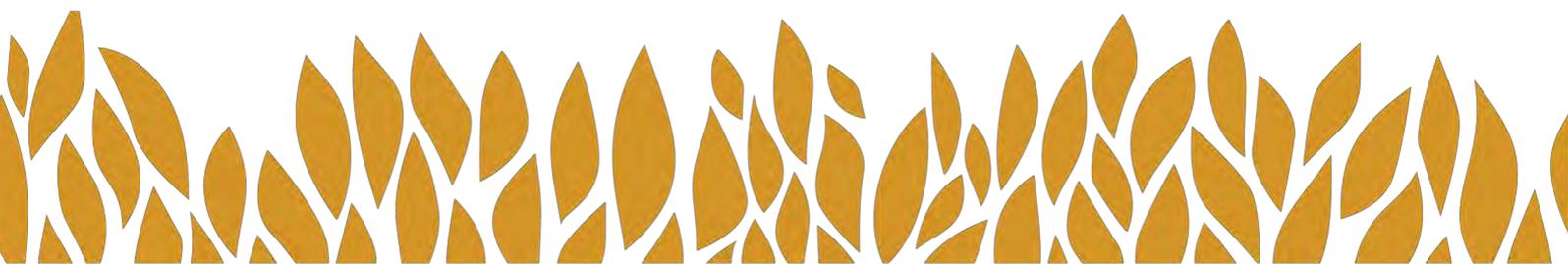


Figure 15: Proportion of occurrences of challenges in line with activities
 Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

The biggest challenge was the original commitment for 10 years being removed. We signed on to a 10-year contract that was bilateral, that was not supposed to be influenced by government, and [that] was a big reason we bought into it. One of the challenges was expressing and talking to government of the [community] let down of that. New words and KPIs wasting communities' time again. Endlessly pushing for further commitment. Currently the last three-and-a-half years we have been funding 8-10 programs for six months. It's created a big space and opportunity for people to do new things in. The biggest challenge is convincing government to keep doing it. The other big challenge has been capacity development of staff and program coordinators. The development of their ideas as a plan and program can take up to six months to sort of concrete their ideas and make them something. There has never been extra funding for SCfC for that on-ground support, mentoring, skills development. But it has been worth it: a number of Aboriginal people that came to us are still going. They re-apply every six months and are still going; they have been working with the LCB and progressing. Has been a challenge but also a huge success, making room for local people to be doing what non-Indigenous people were doing, fulfilling self-determination." FP



6. What has it achieved?

One of the most prominent outcomes of SCfC is the capacity strengthening embedded into the activities. A large proportion of the activities (69%) are building the community capacity of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations to deliver services, and at least half (55%) are building community capacity to lead, plan and prioritise services that families and children need. This capacity strengthening is an important precursor to delivering positive outcomes for children and their families. Half of the activities are delivering to key IAS objectives such as safer families and communities (54%), support the nurturing of young children (54%), and support young people to attend school and get an education (52%). Over a third of activities supported children to be school-ready (40%) or provided children and young people with opportunities to participate in cultural events (38%). A small proportion of activities (9%) delivered outcomes outside the IAS outcomes.

Alignment of activities with SCfC outcomes

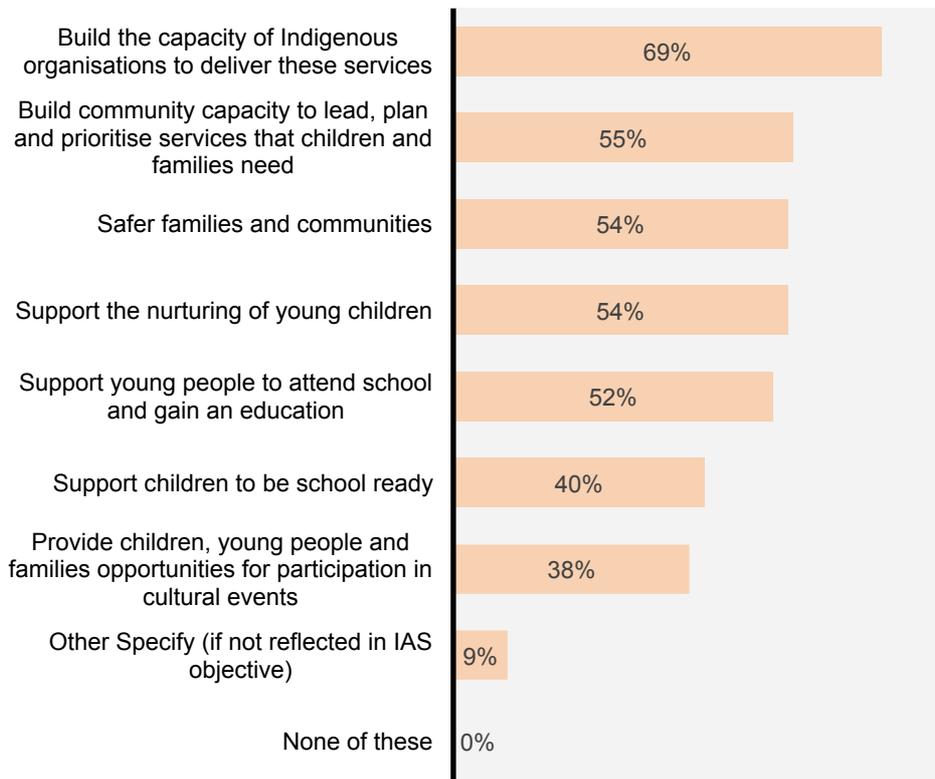
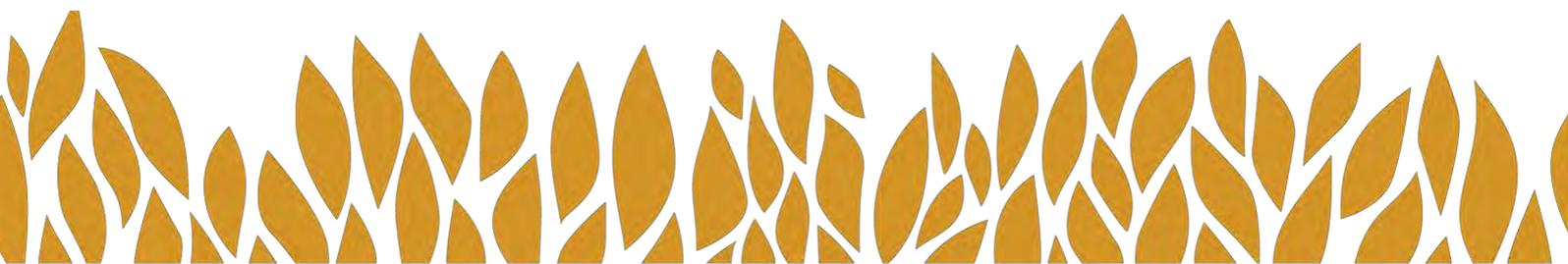


Figure 16: Alignment of activities with SCfC outcomes

Breakdown of outcomes mentioned by community shows that communities had varying degrees of capacity-strengthening activities, depending on the needs of each. All communities addressed the key objectives of the IAS, the focus differed as existing strengths were used to leverage services or programs.



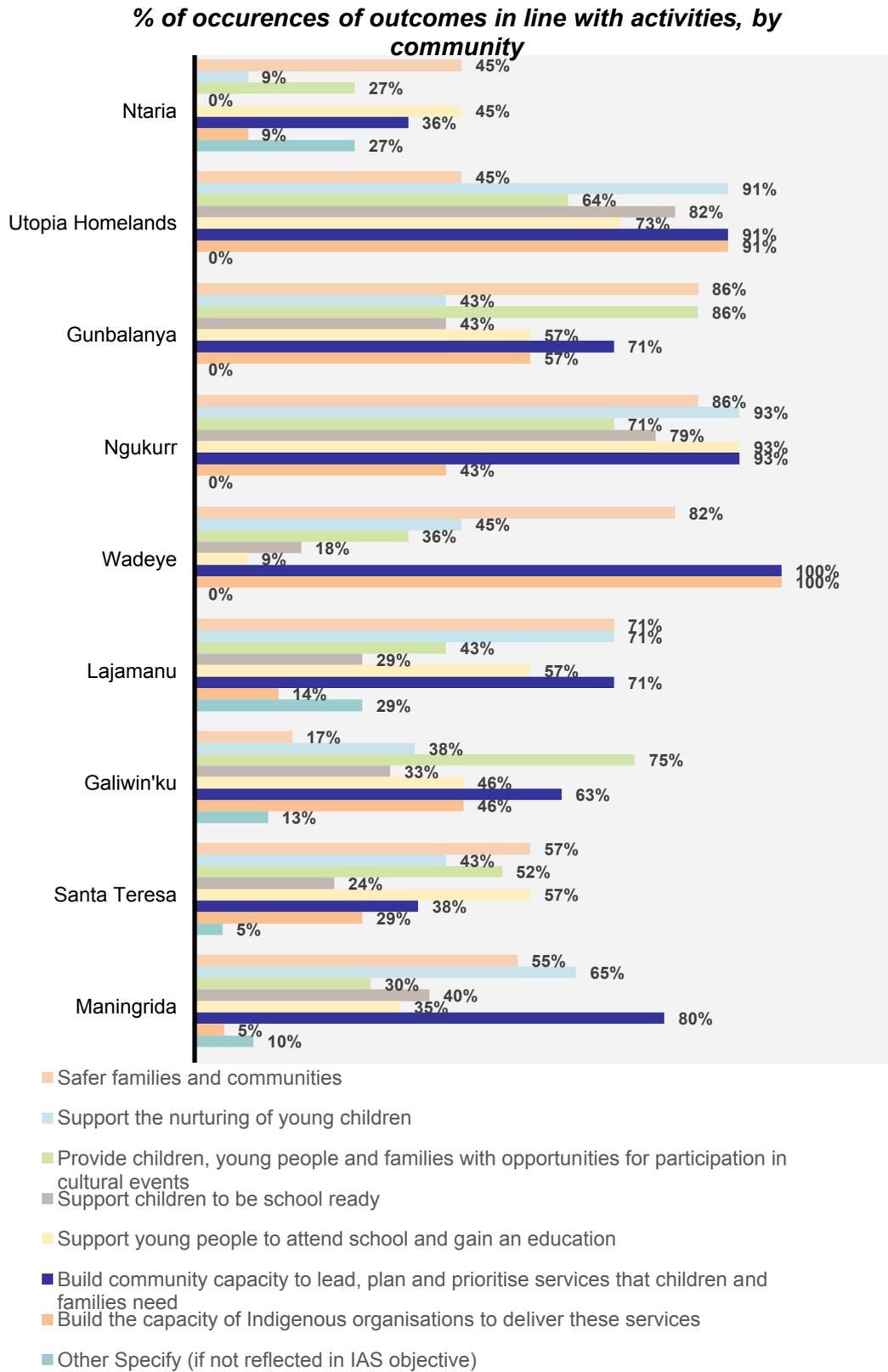


Figure 17: Percentage of occurrences of outcomes in line with activities, by community



Activities were self-assessed, with the main achievement being that 63% of all activities reinforced community ownership (80), used strengths-based practice (79) and resulted in community pride (79). In 61% of activities, communities reported that they felt they were leading the decision-making.

The SCfC program improves the way services are delivered in communities, being more coordinated, efficient or effective in almost half of the activities (46%) and giving more value for money (38%). Importantly, services were delivered in community in a more culturally safe manner (40%).

The qualitative findings were that SCfC helps bring community stakeholders together so they can work more collaboratively. Working to a common goal and overcoming conflict, tension or competition is also stated to be a major impact. Over a third of the activities have resulted in the LCB working together with service providers (38%), community stakeholders and partners (37%), FPs (34%), community members (29%) and, to a lesser extent, the QSSP (7%).

“Local people talk about things we need, like playground and equipment where the kids can play. We all come together and talk about what’s going on and what kind of things we need here.”
Community Stakeholder

A third of activities were self-reported to have used evidence-based practice (36%) or innovative or new services (35%). The qualitative data indicated that where services have been demonstrated to work in remote Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, this evidence-based practice helps inform decision-making. However, it was also acknowledged that few programs or services have been evaluated, so there is a lack of evidence for LCBs to use to determine if a service will work or not. There are also few programs that specifically meet the needs of the community or are

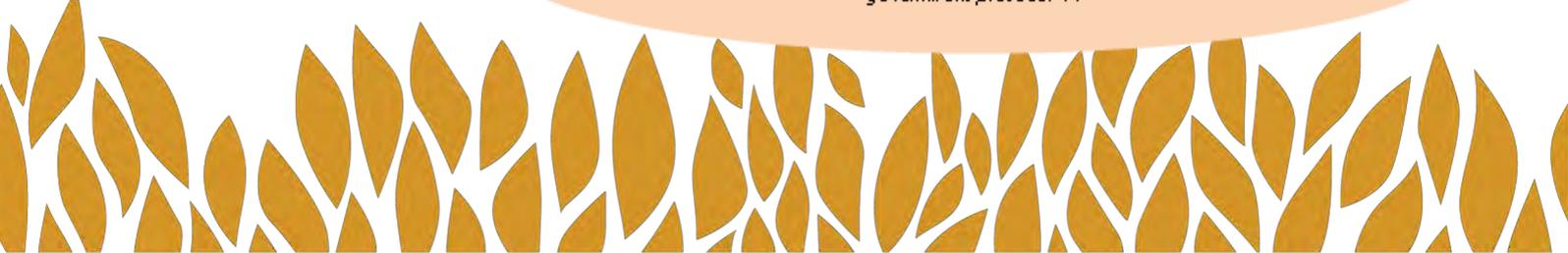
“The SCfC program is helping children learn more of their homeland, kinship cultural way and how children understand knowledge to Western by traditional Yolngu system and structure.”
Community Stakeholder

designed for an Aboriginal target group. Therefore, communities have had to design their own to meet their specific needs. The real benefit of the SCfC is its flexibility to allow for creativity and experimentation to develop culturally appropriate solutions and innovative practices. On most occasions, innovation occurs when success with other structured or experienced programs means the LCB feels it is trusted by government and it has the strengths base and capacity to experiment. On a few occasions innovation occurred over time or urgently as an immediate response to a critical situation identified in the community.

One of the stronger themes in the qualitative findings was the ability for this funding modality to give the power for managing service provider performance to the LCBs. The funding modality made the service providers accountable to the local community for the quality of services they deliver, rather than accountable through performance reports to government contract managers outside the community. Being locally driven, services could be continuously monitored and improved throughout implementation and delivery. A quarter of activities that made service providers more accountable to the community for their service delivery.

“The [funding] agreement itself is something I use, even now, to work out planning for future programs and where it will go.” **FP**

“Commonwealth government takes a lot longer to do a relatively common sense and simple thing. The degree of engagement and quick decision-making on the ground is much better as opposed to the government process.” **FP**



Proportion of occurrences of achievements in line with activities

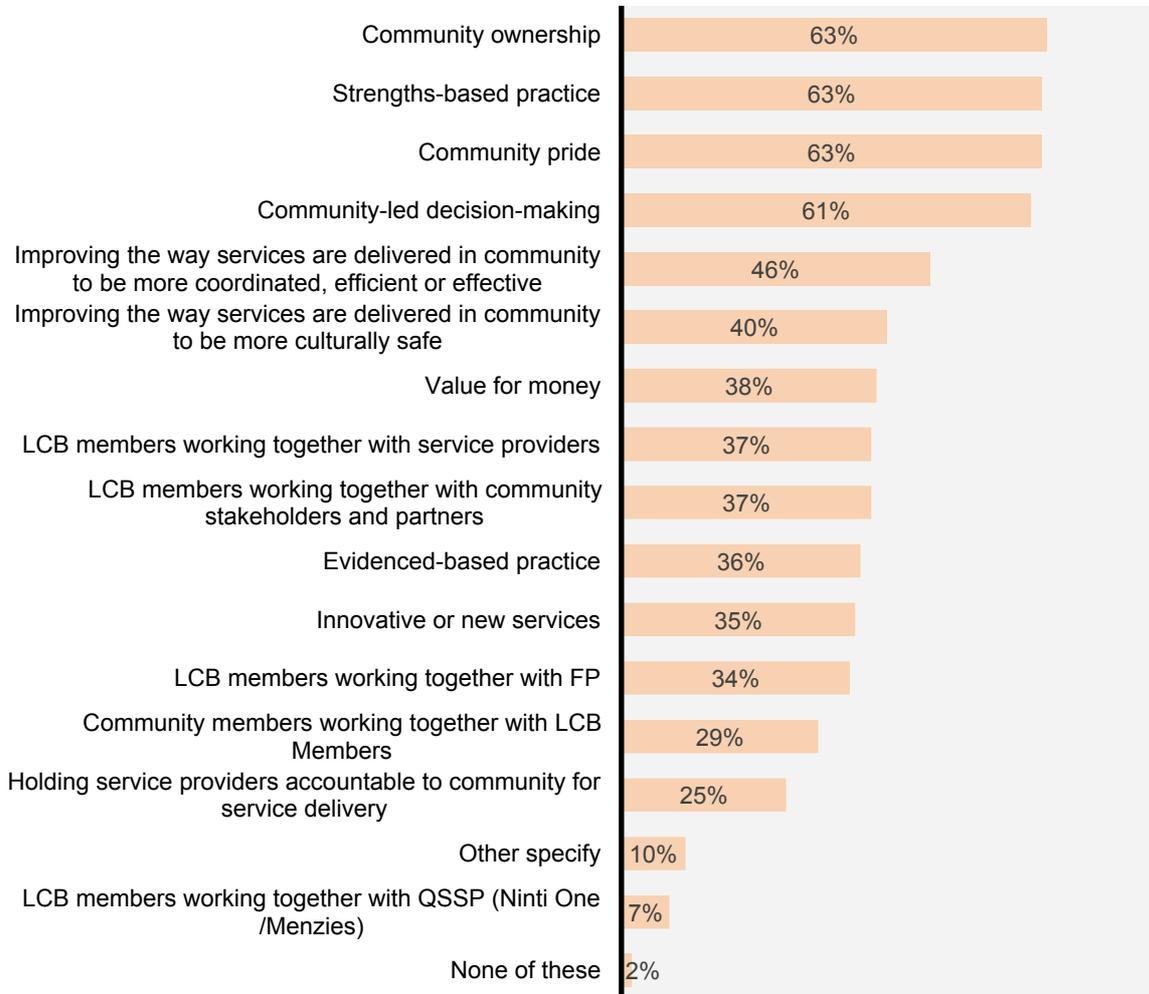
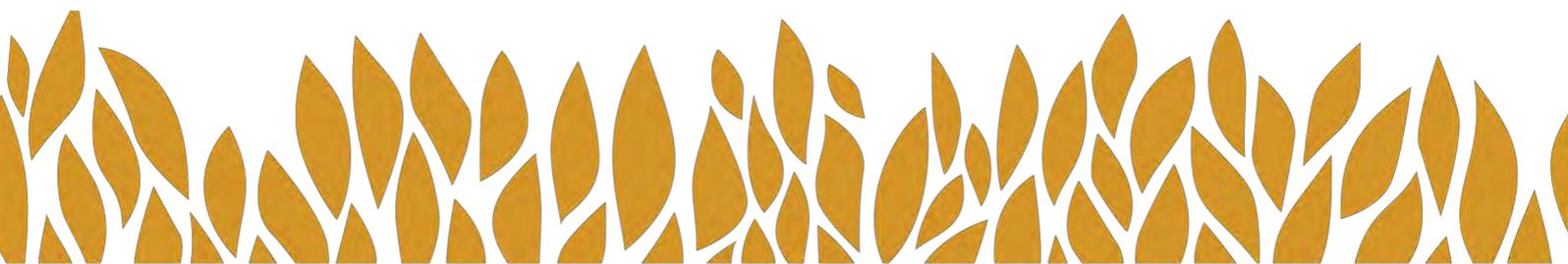


Figure 18: Main achievements produced by the activities



The ripple effect

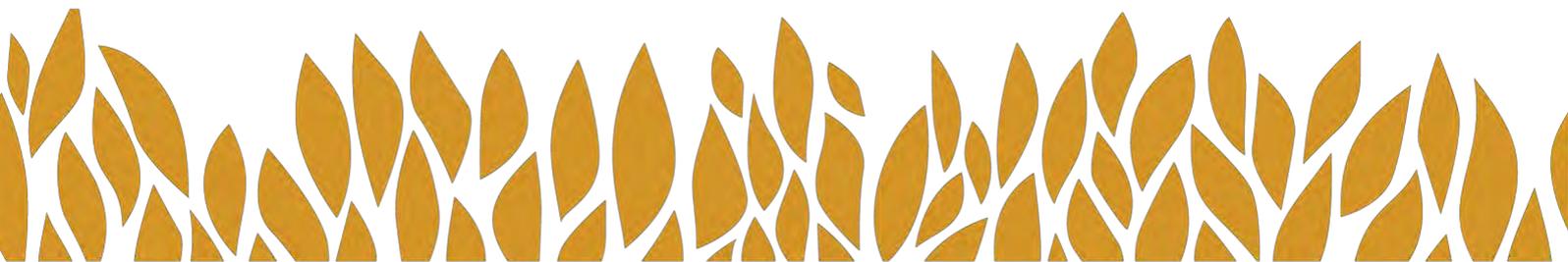
One of the real benefits of SCfC is its ability to influence or change or improve the community even without requiring additional SCfC funding. It is achieving this through its ability to get other jurisdictions to fund activities or programs or projects that they were otherwise not aware of, or thought were not possible, or did not know how to do in community. Examples of the influence of SCfC are:

- LCBs successfully lobbied politicians and PMC for full funding of Royal Flying Doctor mental health service, which enabled the program to continue.
- LCBs lobbied local and state governments on issues associated with children's safety. This resulted in significant investment and expenditure that directly improved the lives of community members.
- SCfC has attracted cash and in-kind contributions to SCfC projects and governance totalling over \$800,000 since 2014 in one community to deliver safety outcomes for children.
- SCfC has leveraged \$450,000 from the Northern Territory Government for a community learning centre and has coordinated and secured funding for investment into infrastructure and programs from non-government sources and government sources.
- The FPs advocated on behalf of the LCBs and local agencies around housing issues, dog control and local governance issues to the relevant authorities responsible for addressing them.
- It supports the coordination of integrated service delivery and the initial stages of collective impact reporting. Although both are in the initial stages of development, this is a significant contribution to improving service delivery in the region.
- It improves collaboration between groups in the community and the governance of groups. The SCfC program provides space and opportunity for collaboration across services. The FPs lead this collaboration to make sure opportunities for training are extended to any interested local staff or teams that may not necessarily be funded by SCfC. This collaboration makes better use of government-funded initiatives that are more effective and efficient.
- It supports whole-of-community efforts. It finds pathways for SCfC funded programs to collaborate effectively with other efforts going on in the community, to increase the impact of all programs. It rallies communities to focus on specific problems so that programs work together, not against each other. For example, a major community concern was volatile substance abuse (VSA), so the LCBs asked every funded agency/organisation to explain how they would support young people struggling with VSA and their families.
- Importantly, FPs feel that they do not fund any resources that a program could access through other means, and they exhaust all avenues before considering if SCfC funding is needed.
- The SCfC program works very strongly with all other service providers within the community, which has allowed partnerships to grow. This has promoted a collaborative culture, enabling organisations to work more harmoniously within the community rather than putting up blockages and barriers.
- A number of projects are delivered without using subcontracting which makes them more efficient and better value for money, for example language support brokerage and some quick response brokerage initiatives.
- The SCfC team provides mentoring support to other programs in the community, some that are funded by SCfC and some that are not. This improves the quality and cultural safety of service delivery. For example, the SCfC coordinators work with the other service providers not

"Government always haps on about collaboration and only has a lens of seeing it in stakeholder meetings, however [FP] just get on with the real work of making it happen." FP

funded by SCfC in weekly one-on-one sessions to help build their skills in program delivery and management.

- Local community members who undertook impact assessment training are now gaining employment assisting other related research that is being conducted in their communities. This improves research outcomes, which drives employment benefits for communities.



7. Evaluating for social innovation

This evaluation was a summative analysis of a program post-implementation. Therefore it is subject to limitation of measuring evidence of change over time. Other gaps include community-level administrative data and a repository for community-level evaluations. As discussed in Chapter 4, evaluation contributes to community memory, which facilitates better decision-making. If funding continues for the 10 communities or additional communities are funded, these community level evaluations could be improved and a meta evaluation undertaken. This could include a longitudinal approach to primary data collection, evaluating specific outcomes related to the vision of each community and the services funded, as well as looking at collective impact, social capital and corporate memory.

The SCfC program design strongly emphasises evaluation of the activities undertaken to better support LCBs with decision-making. There were 168 occasions where activities or events were evaluated. Evidence in these evaluations was primarily community and stakeholder feedback (Figure 19). There was little use of administration data; however, when it was used this greatly improved the ability for triangulation of evidence to support the outcomes. There was little more than descriptive analysis of the survey or feedback data and little evidence of discussions about the results which may or may not have been recorded in other meeting minutes. While these evaluations have all been reported in some way, communities have not been resourced to analyse the data they have gathered and it is unclear to what extent, and in what manner, the findings may have been shared within the communities.

In communities where pre-existing research and evaluation capacity existed, the evaluations were more structured. In other communities, the SCfC helped to develop research and evaluation capacity through the support of the QSSP.

In three communities, evaluations were conducted at levels broader than activity level. Only one of these evaluations is published, the Social Return on Investment of youth programs included Utopia’s SCfC funded projects (Figure 20).



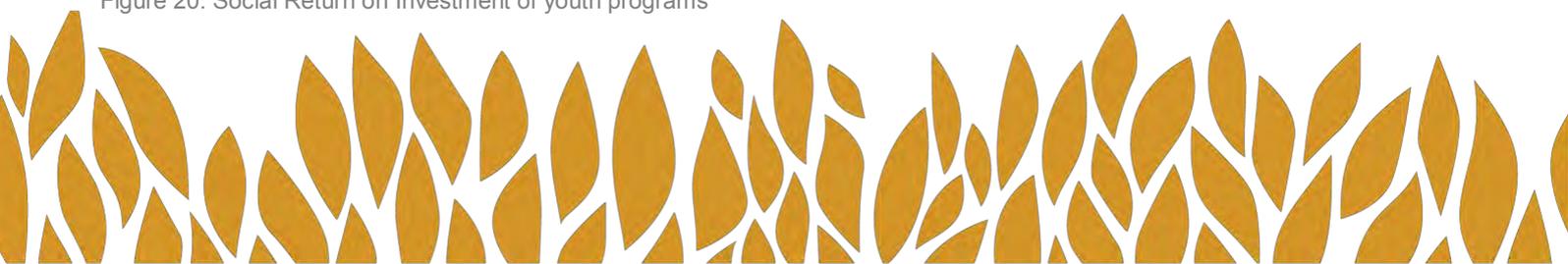
Figure 19: Comic book developed in Utopia to communicate program evaluation



The SROI analyses indicate that all programs are forecast to generate a positive social return on investment over the forthcoming three year investment period. The estimated social return for each dollar invested in the programs is presented below. These indicate that for every dollar invested in the programs analysed for this study, between \$3.48 and \$4.56 of value will be created.



Figure 20: Social Return on Investment of youth programs

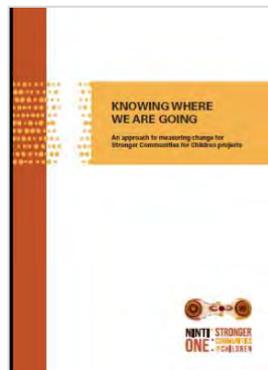


The QSSP has begun assisting with impact assessment. The QSSP has begun assisting with impact assessments by collecting evidence at activity level about SCfC’s progress in meeting its program outcomes, the IAS outcomes and CTG targets. These assessments will improve engagement and participation in the program, which will have benefits beyond the program itself, across the community.

“It’s changed the way of thinking about bad things I went through, and makes me feel happy once again. ‘Don’t break and enter’ and ‘Don’t drink and drive’ songs are a reminder of things that are bad and not to do them. Every time I wake up, I think of the band first. My father wakes me up to go to the band and we go together.”
Participant of Music Program

Turning to the wider impacts within the community, we found that community members interviewed consider the WYDAC Bush Trips to be an important opportunity for elders to be involved in the passing on of cultural knowledge to kids out on country. A great outcome of the trips has been the provision of a positive space for learning between younger and older community members, outside of the community and outside of school hours.

Bush Trips Program



Turning to the wider impacts within the community, our findings are that the adults we interviewed consider the learning about caring for country and the inter-generational passage of information about culture provided in this program are really important. The importance of culture influences so many aspects of people’s lives, which in turn affects people’s learning about country. Community members appreciated that this program provided the space for:

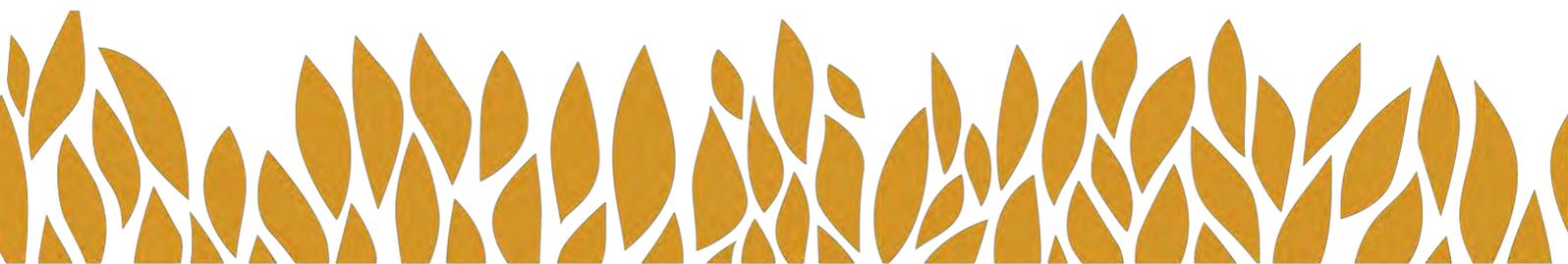
- adults in the community to take on ranger job roles to hand down their cultural knowledge
- kids to have a dedicated space to learn about things such as bush tucker, bush medicine, making traditional hunting tools, and how to look after country in traditional ways

Junior Ranger Program

Evaluation of the SCfC will be most useful if applied to all levels of the program:

- At the policy level, evaluation can be used to define how the SCfC has improved service provision decision-making in remote communities to deliver on IAS outcomes and CTG targets.
- At the community level, evaluation can be used to articulate the collective impact of the SCfC in meeting the community’s vision as outlined in the community plan.
- At a service/program/activity level, evaluation can be used to help service providers understand if the funded activity has improved the participant outcomes.

These are not mutually exclusive, but if evaluation is developed and implemented with each level in mind, the SCfC will be collecting evidence to continuously learn, grow and adapt in meaningful and effective ways.



Learning is important for all kinds of social change efforts such as the SCfC, but it is vital for social innovation. Without a good evidence base, decision-makers and implementers lack crucial information about what patterns and pathways are emerging that require adaptation. The SCfC will always operate under uncertain conditions, which means that decision-makers and implementers often feel their way forward, testing an approach, reflecting on what seems to be happening, abandoning what does not seem to work and focusing on what seems to be taking hold.

But few evaluation approaches are well-suited to support this kind of trial and error; many work against it. The SCfC is a fundamentally different approach from program models that have a known set of elements. This SCfC post-evaluation helped to identify which elements in the model matter, but is not well suited to evaluating what is essentially social innovation.

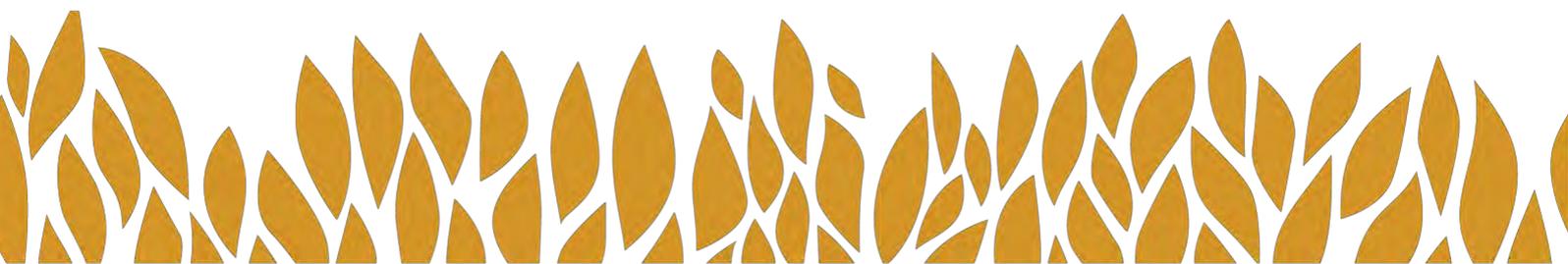
While the long-term goals (IAS and CTG) of the SCfC might be well defined, the path to achieving them is less clear; little is known about what will work, where, under what conditions, how and with whom. Decision-makers will need to use this evaluation to explore what activities will trigger change, and they will need to understand that activities that have successfully triggered a desired change once may not work again. The context needs to be re-examined before any decisions are made about which activities to try next.

One of the biggest challenges in budgeting to evaluate programs like SCfC is that the emerging learnings often create new questions and information needs. This evaluation revealed the need for additional data sources and data collection, which tested the boundaries of the contracted scope of work. Future SCfC evaluation design should not rely on a fixed design with a set number and type of data collection activities, and the budget may also need to be flexible to adapt to changes along the way.

There is also a danger that the snapshot nature of this evaluation creates an impression of a conclusive judgement of SCfC impact, when the program is still in a stage that may show the most promise for transformational change over the long term.

Communities themselves need to have the desire to learn and to incorporate evaluation into their everyday operations. The community memory can then be enhanced to improve decision-making. FPs should not shy away from failure at the expense of learning. Policymakers need good ongoing developmental evaluation funded so that risk can be mitigated by making adaptations and corrections progressively.

There was resistance by LCBs and FPs to developing one overarching program logic as part of this SCfC evaluation, because there was such variation in each community. It is suggested that each community uses the underlying elements identified in this report (Chapter 4) to develop a program logic that resonates with their community. This would ensure the logic draws on the local strengths present, instead of drawing links to what may have been built elsewhere, and reflects an agreement on 'the way it works here' by the key stakeholders: community members, PMC, FPs and QSSP. Specifically, so that they can say "***this is how it works here***".



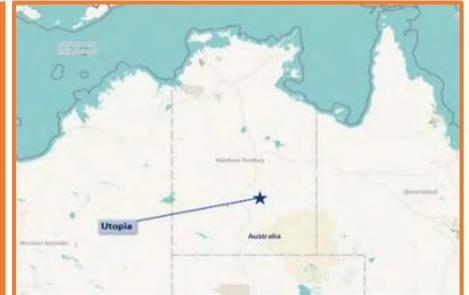
8. Case studies



Case study 1: Utopia

Regional profile

Location: North-east of Alice Springs
Size: Approximately 5,000 km²
Number of communities: Sixteen
Languages spoken: Arrernte, Alyawarre, Anmatyerre, Kaytetye
Localities: Arlparra, Soapy Bore, Kurrajong Bore, Soakage Bore, Theley, Rocket Range, Camel Camp, Mosquito Bore
Value of other funding leveraged: \$450,000



Backbone organisation

The Local Community Board (LCB) is called Apmer akely-akley. The LCB is growing and currently has 87 members, representing all major outstations and family groups within the Utopia region. The inclusive attitude towards group membership means that there is greater involvement in the decision-making process. The Central Australian Youth Link-Up Service (CAYLUS) is the nominated Facilitating Partner (FP), responsible for working with service providers and organisations to ensure effective collaboration.

Common agenda

The LCB works with the community to develop a program that aims to focus on their key issues. The Utopia LCB priorities include:

- Improved health for young mothers and babies
- Improved access to health services and support services for young parents and children
- Stronger incorporation of local knowledge, culture and language in community business
- Improved education and employment opportunities
- Improved health through nutrition
- Stronger language skills leading to greater opportunities and inclusion in decision-making for the community

Mutually reinforcing activities

Prior to SCfC, the communities within Utopia were unhappy with the collaboration between service providers. SCfC acts as a gap-filling service, providing support alongside other funding sources to ensure that the programs delivered are the most beneficial to the communities.

The Family Engagement and Literature Project and Baby Box Project: Books in local language that are made at school are incorporated into the baby box that is provided by the health service. Families receive these when the child is six months old.

Language Support Services Brokerage: This brokerage has provided access to interpreting and community liaison for 15 organisations that work with young people and families in Utopia.

The Hairdressing Course, Fashion Shoot and Health Festival: Mutually reinforcing activities that focus on improving employment opportunities, skills and knowledge of health and wellbeing.

Communication

The community are invited to attend meetings with the LCB and contribute towards the discussion around the services required. Visual reports, newsletters and community awareness events are used to report to the wider community about the project. CAYLUS supports local organisations in simplifying reporting requirements and in measuring and evaluating activities.

Common progress measures

Information and data collected through the program reporting contributes to the evaluation of the SCfC program within Utopia. Service providers are supported to evaluate the activities they deliver to ensure that these continue to meet the requirements of the community. Strong relationships, community ownership and high levels of administrative support are factors that contribute towards successful implementation of the program in Utopia.



11

funded activities

Funding received:

\$1,036,521

7607

activity participants

Little Kids Health and Early Development

Children’s health, early development and skills and the knowledge young parents need are key issues for the community in Utopia.

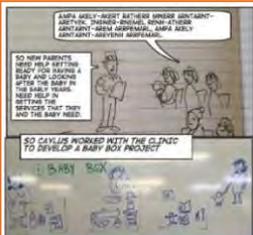
Baby Box

- The Baby Box program provides items to support mothers and babies through antenatal and postnatal stages.
- Revenue generated through the Women’s Place Opportunity Shop is now used to purchase Baby Box items.

Health Festival in Urapuntja

- The Health Festival covered a range of activities, including cooking healthy food for the family, health checks, games, fashion and hairdressing.

Other activities: Early childhood nutrition program, water chiller at Alparra School and fresh food chiller at the community store.



Activities Outside of School Hours

The community in Utopia believe that children and youths need cultural activities outside of school hours to keep them entertained and out of trouble.

Bush Trips

- The community wanted to see more cultural activities for youths.
- Bush trips range from class group walks to overnight stays, incorporating a range of activities with Aboriginal rangers.

Other activities: Utopia Youth Services



Education

A key issue raised by the community highlights the importance of Aboriginal culture and knowledge within the school curriculum.

Aboriginal Language and Culture – books in language

- It is important for school to be a place for children to learn about things that are important to their families as well as about the wider world.
- SCfC funds language lessons for staff and school science-based bush trips. It also funds community members within the Utopia region to produce books in language for children to listen to, read and learn from.



Community Employment

Unemployment is a key issue for the community in Utopia, due largely to existing skills within the community.

Interpreter Service

- The LCB identified a lack of understanding between local people and services that work in the community. The LCB established a brokerage service to pay for interpreting community meetings and other interactions. Local interpreters are paid to do this work. So far 47 people have been employed as interpreters.

Hairdressing Project

- A hairdressing workshop was introduced at school to build on skills within the community. Many students showed an interest in hairdressing as a future career.

Other activities: Fashion shoot, school programs, learning centre, training support for service providers, service provider action group.



Accountability, monitoring and evaluation of funded activities

The LCB expect funds to be used effectively, supporting real outcomes for local people.

Accountability to local people

- The LCB are consumers of funded services, so they bring firsthand knowledge to decision-making
- They have prioritised supporting and building service providers capacity that are based full time in the community. These mostly have their own local boards, which increase levels of community ownership and input.

Expert input

Some change is incremental or complex. Monitoring and evaluation process have been put in place so that outcomes can be measured and improved, including:

- **School – a ‘critical friend’** relationship has been fostered between school projects and Indigenous education experts from the Australian National University. These experts visit and observe programs, support data collection and offer advice and feedback for the development of these projects.
- **A Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis** of the youth program was conducted by the Nous Group.
- **The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)** have assisted the FP in conducting community surveys and gathering and analysing data to learn about the impact of the youth program.
- **Participant data, community surveys and importantly, supportive, on-the-ground monitoring** of funded activities by the FP are built in to all funding agreements.



Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy

Utopia School Visit
August 8-12 2016

A report by Dr Jerry Schwab and Dr Inge Kral

Research School of Social Sciences
College of Arts & Social Sciences
The Australian National University

Case study 2: Ngukkur

Regional profile

Location: Approximately 640 km south-east of Darwin on the banks of the Roper River.
Size: Approximately 95,000 km²
Number of clan groups: Seven
Main language spoken: Kriol



Backbone organisation

The Local Community Board (LCB) is called the Strongbala Pipul, Wanbala Bois Komiti. The LCB currently has eight members, representing four moiety groups. Meetings are generally held monthly; however, poor attendance means there are three core board members making the decisions. The Katherine Regional Aboriginal Health and Related Services (KRAHRS) has been the nominated Facilitating Partner (FP) in Ngukkur since October 2013.



Common agenda

The LCB developed a vision for SCfC on behalf of the community. The priorities for the future of the community are:

- Strong Leaders
- Young Ones Learning from Old Ones
- Knowing Culture Both Ways
- Strong Education
- Respect yourself and Others
- Believe in Yourself
- Action
- Communication
- Strong Healthy Families
- Follow Your Dreams
- Achievement

Mutually reinforcing activities

Senior members of the community believe that the service providers are operating alone instead of collaborating with other service providers in the delivery of programs. Good examples of where KRAHRS has overcome this challenge to collaborate are the cooking program and the Schools-Ready Kids Program.

The cooking program is very well known within Ngukkur. The program was developed through a partnership between Guluman Child and Family Centre and KRAHRS. KRAHRS runs mutually reinforcing activities through the School-Ready Kids Program. The program aimed to re-engage children and families in education from the early childhood stage by addressing a combination of issues, including early childhood development, care, education and school readiness. A resident speech pathologist and occupational therapist were funded in April 2017 for children identified as having specific learning needs. Many programs have been developed to run in partnership with the school, including the 2015 Christmas Holiday Program, Girls Leadership to Darwin and the Yangbala Rangers Camp.

Communication

Community consultation is minimal, as organisations avoid this process in favour of consulting with advisory groups. Concerns have been raised that the community is not being included in the decision-making process. Many decisions around SCfC-funded activities in the community have not been made through community and board decision-making processes.

Common progress measures

The success of the community programs is typically measured through participation rates. Individuals who are involved in the funded activities commented that the reporting seemed to be straightforward; however, they were yet to complete the reporting process.



14

funded activities

Funding received:

\$3,267,479

1191

activity participants

Capacity Strengthening

Capacity strengthening was identified as necessary to effectively deliver the services supported by SCfC funding.

Local Community Board Development

- Two knowledge sharing seminars were held in Katherine in November 2016 and May 2017.

Community Consultation Cultural Camp

- A community consultation was held on outstation Namalawirri to discuss, prioritise and finalise the SCfC plan.



Activities Outside of School Hours

The community in Ngukurr highlighted the importance of having activities and child care available for children and youths outside of school hours.

Christmas Holiday Activities

- Activities were run over the Christmas holidays to keep children entertained. These included movie nights, football games and spear-throwing competitions. The holiday activities provided children with the opportunity to participate in cultural events.

School Holiday Learning Program

- Incentive camps were held during school holidays to reward students who are actively involved in learning and who regularly attend school.

Other activities: Promotional family fun days, AFL clinic, engaging young people and child care.



Education

Education, culture and cyber safety are key issues that were identified by the community in Ngukurr.

Building a Safer Community through Cooking

- The cooking program was developed to bring community members together to engage in discussions around health, education and culture as well as improve culinary skills.
- The program focused on teaching parents about preparing healthy meals for their children.

Learning Camp – Indigenous Ecological Knowledge

- The program was developed in partnership with the school to incorporate mentoring senior students. Positive relationships are critical to the progression of the program.
- A unique collaboration between scientists and Aboriginal people in remote south-eastern Arnhem Land is building knowledge about country and how local people can better manage it.

Other activities: School Kids Ready program, speech therapy and occupational health, adult cooking, computer training, cyber safety program, arts and media, Ngukurr language, leadership program, girls leadership (basketball)

Youth Self Determination

Youth self-determination and youth leadership were recognised as a key priority within the Ngukurr community.

Youth Leadership and Development Music and Visual Art Project

- The program was designed to provide musical instruments and tuition to community members. As part of the program, members of the community were also selected to participate in community arts management.

Other activities: Strong leaders training and Yangbala Rangers Camp.



Case study 3: Galiwin'ku

Regional profile

Location: Elcho Island, Northern Territory

Number of communities/clans: Eight

Languages spoken: Djambarrpuyngu, Galpa, Golpa, Golumala, Gumatj, Liya'gawumirr, Wangurri, Warramiri and Gupapuyngu



Backbone organisation

There are currently 10 female members and two male members of the Local Community Board (LCB) representing eight different clan groups. The LCB in Galiwin'ku is called Yolngu Wanganhamirri Mitj' (YWM) and they are responsible for listening to community priorities and making decisions about funding services that meet the community's needs.

The Facilitating Partner (FP) in Galiwin'ku is the Australian Red Cross, working in partnership with Yalu Maringithinyaraw Indigenous Corporation (Yalu). In Galiwin'ku, SCfC is set up as open funding rounds twice per year, inviting activity ideas from local community groups and organisations. The LCB decides which services will benefit their community most and align best with their priorities and with SCfC guidelines. Yalu and Red Cross coordinators provide support to each funded program throughout their delivery, including providing on-the-job training and mentoring to help activities meet their reporting requirements.

Common agenda

The LCB, YWM, formed in 2012 as an integrated family services group of Indigenous staff members from each of the services in the community with the expertise and agenda to improve how services support families and children. In 2013 they approached Yalu and Red Cross to apply for SCfC because they saw a chance to make positive changes for future generations. Their united focus is to improve pathways for children. Galiwin'ku have funded the following SCfC activities in 2017:

- The Baby Food Project
- Playgroup Leaders
- The Brain Story Book
- Families and Youth Wellbeing
- Hope for Health
- Galiwin'kupuy Dhampirik Wandinyamirr
- Galiwin'ku Women's Space
- Yalu Team Projects
- Mo Ninia's Film

Mutually reinforcing activities

Partnership between Yalu and the Australian Red Cross: This partnership began in 2013, with a focus on developing the capacity within Yalu to operate as a strong organisation that meets local development needs, manages projects and other initiatives and navigates government expectations and requirements to be ready to manage SCfC independently. Red Cross staff work as a resource to be led by YWM and Yalu to fulfil the SCfC program. There is an Indigenous SCfC coordinator employed by Yalu and a non-Indigenous coordinator employed by Red Cross, enabling two-way learning and mentoring.

Families as First Teachers: This program runs mutually reinforcing activities such as the Baby Food Project and Playgroup Leaders. The Playgroup Leaders also participate in shared activities with Baby Hub and the Indigenous Parenting Program, extending the Playgroup Leaders' capacity as early childhood educators.

The Brain Story Book: This is a community program partnering with a local artist. The story book explains the impact that sniffing petrol can have on the brain, on family, culture and spirit. The book is being produced in collaboration with the Literacy Production Centre at Shepherdson College. The project also incorporates workshops with children, families and youth services. Copies of the book will also be made available to other services.

Communication

The reporting framework and timeline are difficult for service providers. Reporting is time consuming and challenging, and the LCB struggles with long and complicated reports that need to be written in English. A better process or more time is needed to build skills to transfer more reporting requirements in English from non-Indigenous staff members. Knowledge about the SCfC-funded services available to the community is spread through word of mouth and SCfC activity booklets. There is strong communication between the community and LCB representatives, with many community members hearing about SCfC-funded activities through their LCB representative. The coordinators work closely to explain complex bureaucratic processes, such as financial management, and to unpack western systems in a culturally appropriate way to the LCB. LCB members feel they are building deeper understanding about service provision and government processes in their community through SCfC.

Common progress measures

For the LCB, a key measure of success is that Yolngu people are encouraged to develop the solutions they would like to provide for their communities and have opportunities to participate in implementing them through learning the skills to create programs and deliver activities and report on them. The services provided are reassessed for funding every six months. This helps to ensure that they meet the needs of the community and are working well. Participation in the services and increased meaningful employment for local people is used to measure the success of the SCfC program. Galiwin'ku SCfC consistently employs 90% or more Indigenous staff. In Galiwin'ku, the theory of change is that investing in the services and staff and opportunities for meaningful employment is a vital first step to improving the lives of children and wellbeing of the community. The program is growing, with more members of the community working together by developing other programs.

24

funded activities

Funding received:

\$3,267,479

5373

activity participants

Community Health

Community health was identified as a key issue by the Galiwin'ku community.

The Baby Food Project

- Twice-weekly cooking classes run by the baby food worker. Classes focus on the nutritional needs of babies.
- Aims to educate mothers about the nutritional needs of babies aged 6–18 months.

Galiwin'kupuy Dhampirik Wandinyamirr

- The program employs a head coach and three staff to mentor people in the community to promote a healthy lifestyle and incorporate running into community life.
- Monthly fitness checks are carried out as part of the program. Participants and members of the broader community are also able to join in First Aid training and CPR.



Community Safety

Women's safety is a priority for the Galiwin'ku community.

Women's Safe Place

- The program supports community-driven efforts to create a women's safe house in Galiwin'ku.
- A three-year strategic plan is being developed through community consultation on the development and implementation of Aboriginal-led solutions to domestic and family violence.
- Local staff will also partake in a research tour that allows them to network with other domestic and family violence services to learn from their experiences.



Education

Education around health and wellbeing is a key concern for the Galiwin'ku community.

Families as First Teachers Playgroup Leaders

- Conversational reading, learning games and skills around good hygiene are delivered as part of the program.
- The playgroup leaders are able to continue onsite training and further their capacity as early childhood educators through engagement with Baby Hub and the Indigenous Parenting Program.

Yalu Team Project

- Built on a collaboration between the school and local rangers in the Learning on Country program to improve access to Yolngu education and cultural knowledge for children at school.
- Activities are run to build children and young people's cultural identity and confidence in two worlds. Themes cover kinship and family relationships, Yolngu seasons, bush foods and medicines, cultural law and discipline and respect.



Youth and Training

Youth training and wellbeing were raised as key priorities for the Galiwin'ku community.

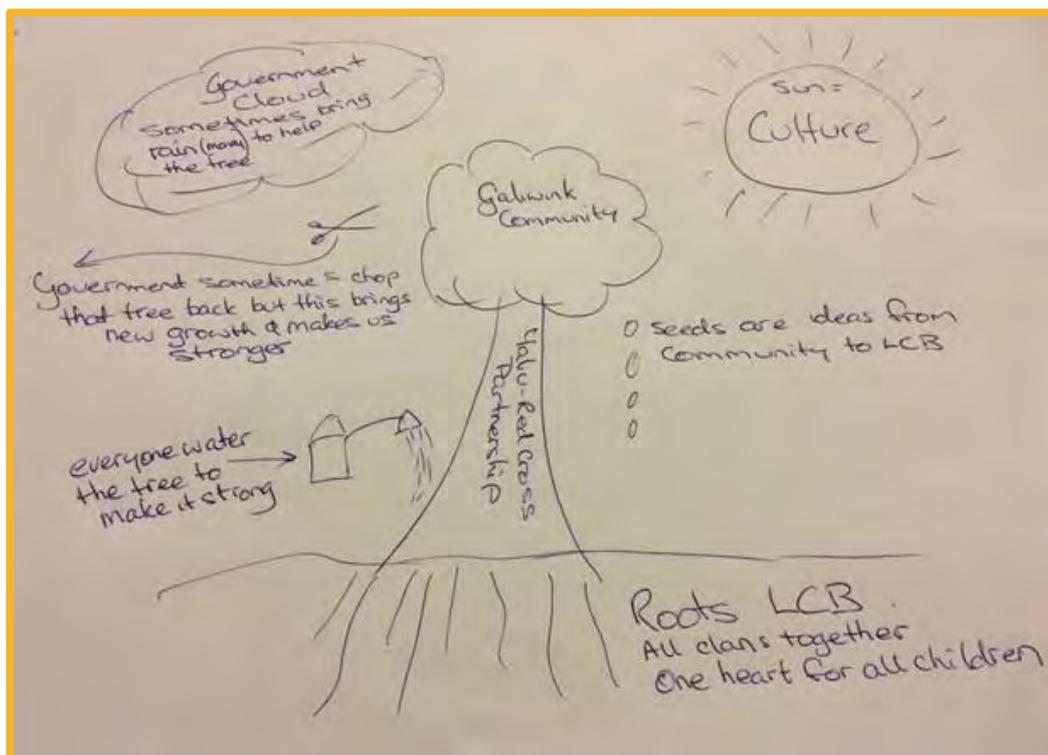
Families and Youth Wellbeing

- The program works with young people who are engaging in sniffing behaviours.
- Activities are carried out to encourage behaviour change, with the family's understanding and commitment.

Mo Ninjas Film

- Creative way to engage young people to become more involved in their community and pursue new skills. Worked with 40 Yolngu actors and crew
- Opportunity for young people to express themselves and build skills and confidence in storyboarding, props and sets, lighting, rehearsals, filming, editing and sound tracking.





Organic growth with roots in culture

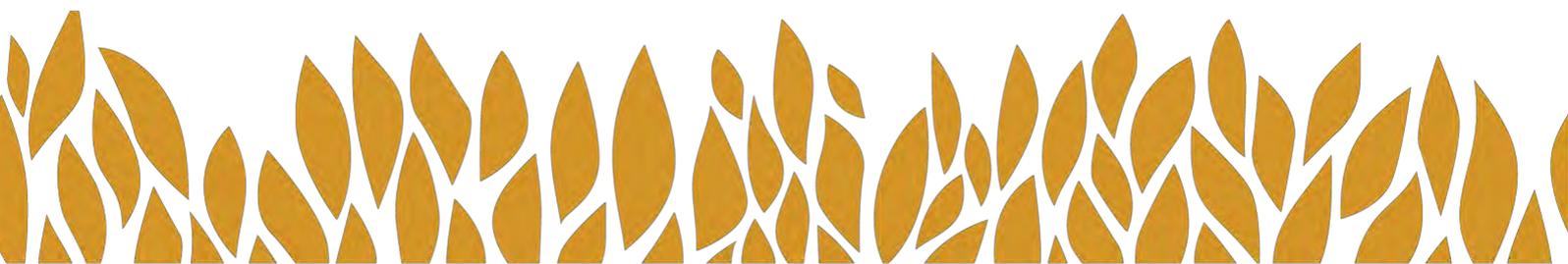
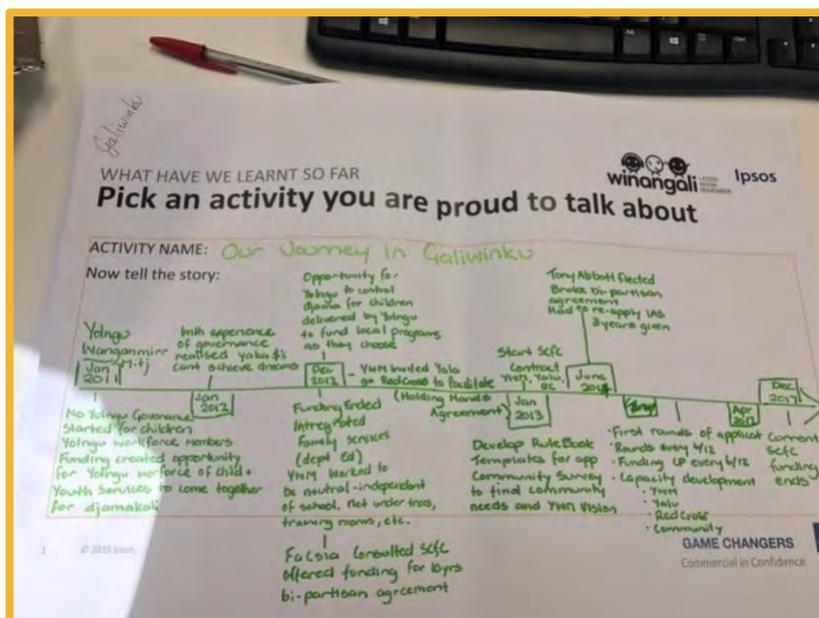
During the evaluation, the Galiwin'ku LCB described the SCfC program in organic terms, such as growing a plant, tree or garden which is symbolic of the place-based localised approach that the SCfC program sought to develop and include:

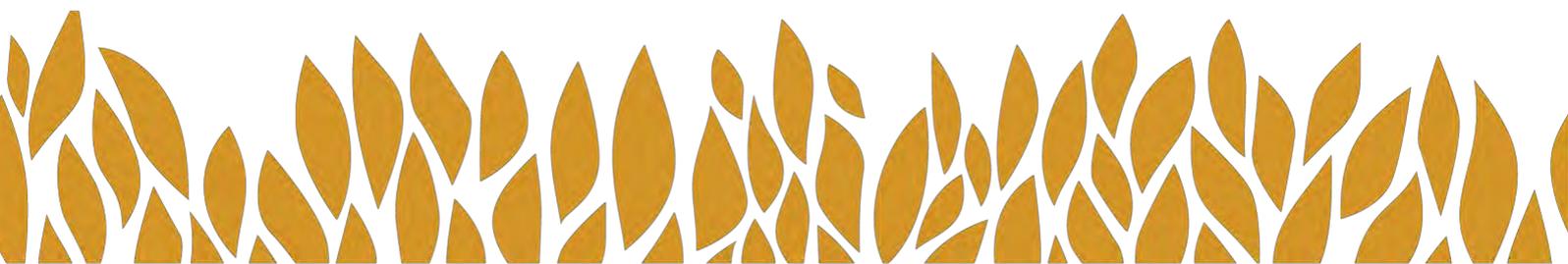
- deep roots drawing on the cultural connectedness to the land, ancestors and Elders for good governance
- collective focus of the whole community on the goal of growing up stronger, healthier, happier children, these child health and wellbeing goals represent the outcome as leaves or fruit or flowers on the tree
- hard work, support and nurturing needed to tend to the (tree/plant) program so that it will grow
- time needed for the (tree/plant) program to grow
- sources of energy such as water and sunlight that help the (tree/plant) grow are things present in the community, such as community knowledge and traditional culture
- seeds to start the growth are ideas that can come from anywhere to start the program activities
- the plant needs to be strong to survive times of low resources or changes in the weather that are unpredictable (like drought or cyclone)
- external support that helps growth, for example fertiliser, stakes, cross-pollination by bees.



In Galiwin'ku, the model that was developed in the beginning of YWM is called the Dhatam (Water Lily) model, and it is still used as the LCB guideline for SCfC in Galiwin'ku today. This painting and image explains a vision and pathway for YWM, how they exist as a group and also as individuals who bring strength to a program that is effective and accountable in Galiwin'ku. The roots of the Dhatam represent their foundations and role as LCB; the stem is a pathway for children; the leaves represent partnerships and stakeholder relationships in community. The hash strokes and water behind the Dhatum are culture, community members and clans. The flowers and fruits are the outcomes and potential for Galiwin'ku community, children, youth and families.

The image below depicts the timeline of the program model in Galiwin'ku. Significantly, the community-led approach to improving services began prior to SCfC, with the creation of YWM, and SCfC has provided a framework for funding and decision-making at the local level to enact their vision.





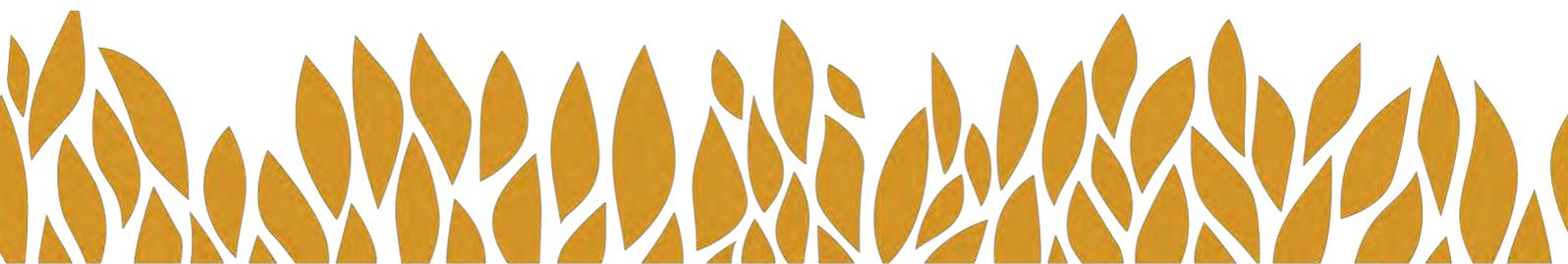
Appendix A: Methodology

The broad goals of the evaluation were to:

1. Clarify the theory of change by reviewing the alignment of the existing program logic with changes in SCfC policy goals or program guidelines and produce a revised program logic or theory of change..
2. Describe how the model has been implemented, whether the model has been implemented as intended, how has this varied by place or circumstances, to what extent and why. This is an examination of the operation of the model and its alignment with the original principles of SCfC and whether these principles are an appropriate guide for program implementation:
 - a) at the community level, by Facilitating Partners, and subcontracted entities
 - b) at the Quality Service Support Panel level
 - c) at the government level (PMC)
3. Determine progress towards outcomes in each site and examine the causal pathways that contribute towards change and the mechanisms driving intended and any unintended outcomes. This should focus on immediate and intermediate outcomes identified in the program logic, that is, the operation of structures and processes (including local community governance and integrated service system and local capacity building), noting that progress towards intermediate outcomes may be limited due to the limited time since implementation or the circumstances prevailing in a particular community.
 - a) Examine whether communities are pursuing similar or different outcomes, how and why, clarifying in particular whether sites have focused on children's development and, if so, how this outcome is being pursued.
4. Assess the likely contribution of SCfC to longer term outcomes for the communities (i.e. those articulated by LCBs), across the 10 sites and across the program in general. While it is too early to make a full assessment of outcomes, the evaluation assesses progress towards intended outcomes based on testing the underlying program theories against available evidence (existing data, literature and community feedback).
 - a) The evaluation also examines the availability of data on signs of progress and suggests options for further collection of relevant data in the future. Concrete recommendations are required about measuring change in child development outcomes that are attributable to the program.

The purpose of the evaluation was to clarify – before the scheduled funding ends – what the SCfC program is in practice, how it varies in different contexts and whether it appears to be working as intended. The evaluation questions aimed to determine if the set of resources (the SCfC program) that have been implemented in a complex system (remote Aboriginal communities) have made a difference and, if so, what types of outcomes were achieved. The evaluation asks how, why and to what extent does the SCfC work to improve different types of child development outcomes for children in the different types of remote communities where the program may have been implemented differently.

Understanding how the model of the SCfC program works and when it works requires an understanding of the way it was interpreted, how it was implemented, whether this affected the range of interventions undertaken and whether they were successful or not. How the interventions (services and activities) were rolled out and the timeframes under which the program operated may have changed the community context for the child, their family or their environment in such a way that a child (or family) made different choices or, perhaps without being aware of why, behaved differently. This knowledge was drawn from existing evaluation data from the Facilitating Partners (FPs) and interviews with the Local Community Board (LCB) members, service providers and FPs who were involved in those interventions, rather than a large suite of additional measures administered across the community.



The approach taken was grounded in theory but refined for practicality given how the research is framed and the budget and timeline constraints. The substantive theories that have been incorporated and the rationale for doing so is outlined in the following table.

Table 3: Substantive theory incorporated and rationale

This table provides an overview of the substantive theories and rationale incorporated into the research.		
Substantive theories	Given that:	Formal theory is used to:
Complexity theory	... there are complex adaptive systems in placed-based community development programs like the SCfC recognise the embedded systems and interrelationships. The SCfC works across these systems and is a complex intervention.
Community-driven principles	... the SCfC program gives control of the community development process, resources and decision-making to LCB members test the underlying assumption that communities are the best judges of how their lives and livelihoods can be improved. If supported with adequate resources and information, legitimate power to influence and opportunities to work within existing value systems, communities can organise to meet their needs and respond to emerging challenges.
Problem-driven iterative adaptation	... the SCfC program aims to identify local problems and find solutions that meet community needs, and that the program focuses on a monitoring and learning approach because programs may need to be developed that have not been trialled before but are grounded in substantive theory determine if the SCfC program has created an environment for decision-making that encourages positive deviance and experimentation (as opposed to designing projects and programs and then requiring agents to implement them exactly as designed) with embedded-in-action learning approaches using ground-up rather than top-down innovation, and test if services funded are viable, legitimate, relevant and supportable.
Early childhood development theories	... the SCfC program focuses on funding activities grounded in formal theory because they are (sometimes) more effective determine if increasing the LCBs knowledge about how children develop, the LCBs can make more informed decisions about what services will deliver the best outcomes for their community.
Behavioural science	... the SCfC program aims to change people's behaviour and formal theories aim to be explanatory identify potential underlying mechanisms to determine if SCfC activities support informed and healthy choices.

The evaluation theories that have been incorporated and the rationale for doing so is outlined in the following table.

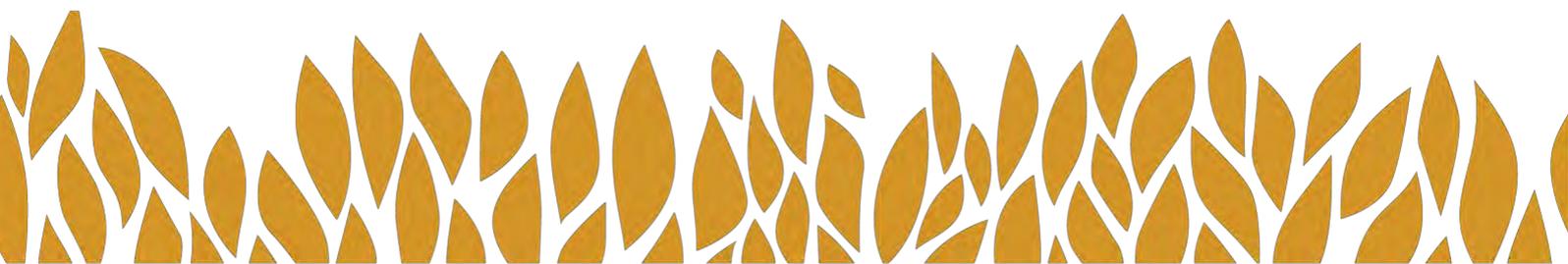


Table 4: Evaluation theories incorporated and rationale

This table provides an overview of the evaluation theories and rationale incorporated into the research.	
Evaluation theories	Rationale
Implementation science	An implementation review is an interactive review process between program implementation partner and service providers and policy managers: "What was done and how can it be done better?"
Realist evaluation	A realist approach has explicit philosophical underpinnings: "What works, for whom, in what respects, to what extent, in what contexts and how?" A realist evaluation aims to identify the underlying generative mechanisms that explain how the outcomes were caused and the influence of context.
Results-based accountability	This uses a real-time approach to describe what desired results look like, define results in measurable terms and use measures to drive action plans for improvement: "What has been achieved to date and can we see change will occur in the future?"
Participatory action research	Many Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander programs have been evaluated using participatory approaches. In a monitoring and learning approach, sharing knowledge is part of the research process.
Systems thinking	Systems thinking is used to understand how different systems interact.

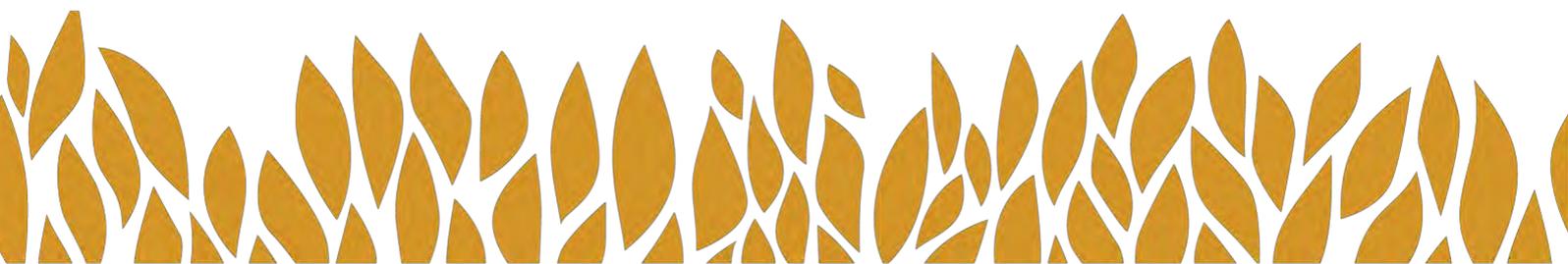
The evaluation looked at the SCfC objectives, as well as the broad areas of program relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

There were three stages to the overall design of the project: Preparation, fieldwork and reporting.

Stage 1: Preparation

The planning and scoping phase of the evaluation provided preliminary guidance to a more in-depth process for organising the field visits which occurred in Stage 2. This stage included:

- SCfC Knowledge Sharing Workshop in November 2016 (facilitated by QSSP) to introduce evaluation to the 10 FPs and LCB members
- Program Logic Workshop (facilitated by Winangali) with QSSP, service providers and relevant stakeholders to discuss the theory of change model upon which the SCfC program was built to clarify the existing program theory and program logic and explore the range of outcome pathways that may be expected to operate
- Document review across all 10 communities, looking for patterns, differences and alignment with the overarching program goals
- Brief literature review to look at the common measures, metrics and approaches that other initiatives have used to evaluate their impact. The review investigated whether there was substantive theory / evidence-based practice that supported the program activities undertaken in the SCfC.
- Secondary data review driven by what the community plans identified as areas to be addressed. This became very limited due to lack of either granularity of the data at a



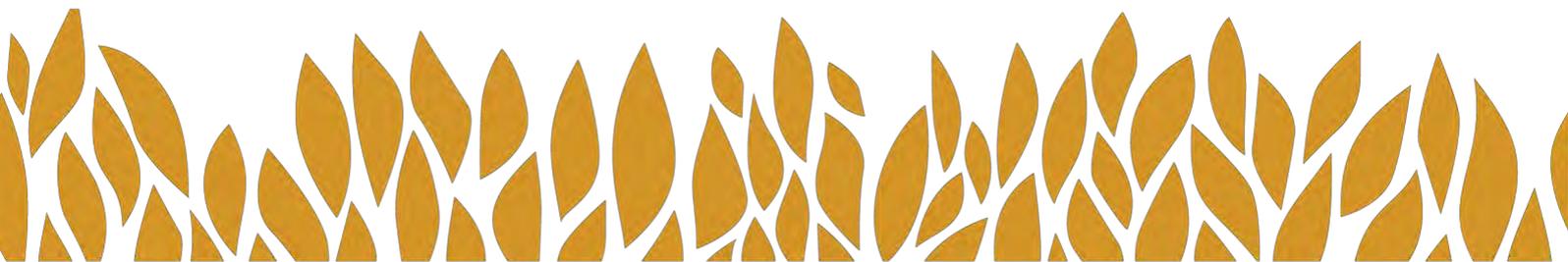
community level or relevant indicators to match the outcomes described by the community plans.

Stage 2: Fieldwork

In the case of the SCfC program, there was a strong narrative that told the story of the underlying processes and factors explaining and driving change as told by community members and key stakeholders that complemented the other data sources. Stage 2 used an array of mixed methodologies.

The purpose of this phase was to obtain insights into the underlying processes and factors explaining and driving change using a realist approach. This assisted in refining the evaluation questions. Quantitative, qualitative and participatory methods were used to distil the impact on the community. These were developed in the community with the local research team.

Fieldwork was conducted in Galiwin'ku, Ngukurr and Utopia. Two local researchers (male/female) were employed to help recruit participants, conduct interviews, analyse data and report.

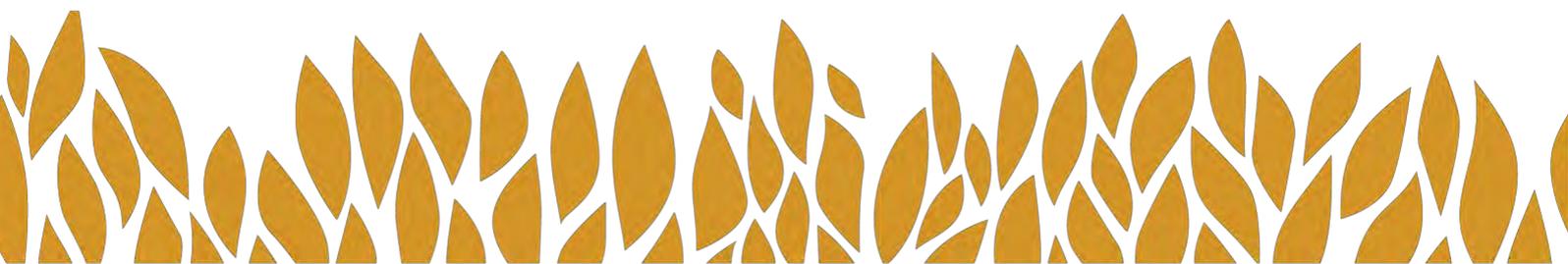


A summary of participants included in the fieldwork include:

Table 5: Fieldwork participant summary

This table provides an overview of the participants interviewed during fieldwork.

Type of group	Role in program	Role in evaluation	Method	Galiwin'ku	Ngukurr	Utopia
Parents/ primary carers	Beneficiaries of services, for themselves and their children. May also be on committees or staff of local organisations that have benefited from SCfC	Evaluation participant	Qualitative and quantitative survey	n=23	n=7	n=0
Local Elders, community leaders, children and young people	Beneficiaries of services, for themselves or their families/community. May be on committees or staff of local organisations that have benefited from SCfC	Evaluation participant	Tell the story	n=11	n=4	n=3
Local Community Board	Have directed local SCfC project through a formal process	Evaluation participant Review findings	Tell the story	n=5	n=4	n=3
Staff and managers of local organisations (e.g. school, police, youth program, clinic/health service, regional councils) or regional organisations	Informed observers of the program. May be subcontracted to provide services under the program and may have benefited from other forms of support from SCfC (e.g. training or coordination support)	Evaluation participant Review findings	In-depth interview and online survey	n=4	n=4	n=12
FP managers and SCfC staff	Management and implementation of the program. Facilitate interagency collaboration in community	Research participant Advisory Group Facilitate research in community	In-depth interview and online survey	n=3	n=2	n=0
Stakeholders (past and present)	Historical knowledge of the program implementation			n=11 (across all 10 communities)		



In-depth interviews with community members: Qualitative interviews uncovered useful insights and allowed a relatively free exchange of information compared with group discussions. This is particularly the case when dealing with confidential or sensitive topics. People from a number of key organisations, commercial businesses, government services and community organisations were consulted to measure outcomes.

In-depth interviews with Local Community Board members (LCB): Qualitative interviews with members of past and present LCBs identified how decision-making may have changed in the community and the impact of the SCfC on governance and empowering community leadership.

In-depth interviews with key stakeholders: We undertook in-depth interviews with key stakeholders in the community, including service providers and other agencies (health, justice, welfare). Most interviews were conducted in person, but some done over the phone if stakeholders were not in the community at the time of the fieldwork. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researchers undertook interviews with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, and non-Indigenous researchers undertook interviews with other stakeholders as appropriate.

Telling the story of SCfC: Vignettes are a powerful way for participants to describe outcomes, changes in attitudes, behaviours and norms; these stories helped identify the mechanisms of change. The use of a decorative design or small illustration can provide a stimulus to tell a powerful story that informs the evaluation. Consent to use any images or stories in the publications arising from evaluation was gained.

Quantitative research

The quantitative research was an online survey of the number, type/range and utilisation of services in SCfC communities both before and after implementation of SCfC, to measure improvements in adequacy of the number and range of services available (assuming that services that are more appropriate for local needs will be more heavily utilised). It was combined with an upload facility to attach documents for the document review.

SCfC Knowledge Sharing Workshop April 2017

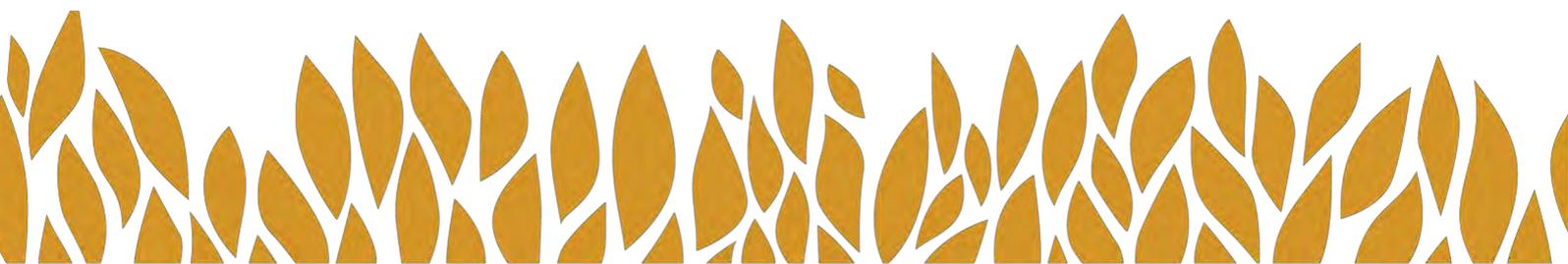
Winangali researchers attended the SCfC Knowledge Sharing Workshop (facilitated by QSSP) to undertake a one-day theory consolidation workshop for the 10 FPs and LCB members.

Stage 3: Analysis and reporting

Descriptive data analysis generally comprises the bulk of a quantitative component of the report.

The deliverables for this project included:

- A preliminary report including an update of progress of the evaluation
- A final report of findings for publication
- A short community report for each community involved in the case study research to provide the results back to the communities.



Appendix B – Dashboard statistics

To improve shared measurement, communities need to be able to access more administrative, health and education statistics so that they can integrate it with their perceptions about what is happening. For this purpose, QSSP set up community dashboards with such data. However, they were not used very much to inform decision-making, and there was little support to build local capacity in the LCBs to improve this usage. Not all data was available for community-level populations as at 30 June 2017. There were challenges in accessing relevant data for decision-making. There were challenges accessing data at a community level to measure change over time. There were challenges obtaining data at a community level within the decision-making timeframe as often there was lags in the release of data.

Population data

The resident population in the studied communities varies between 542 for Plenty Highway and 2566 for Maningrida (Figure 21).

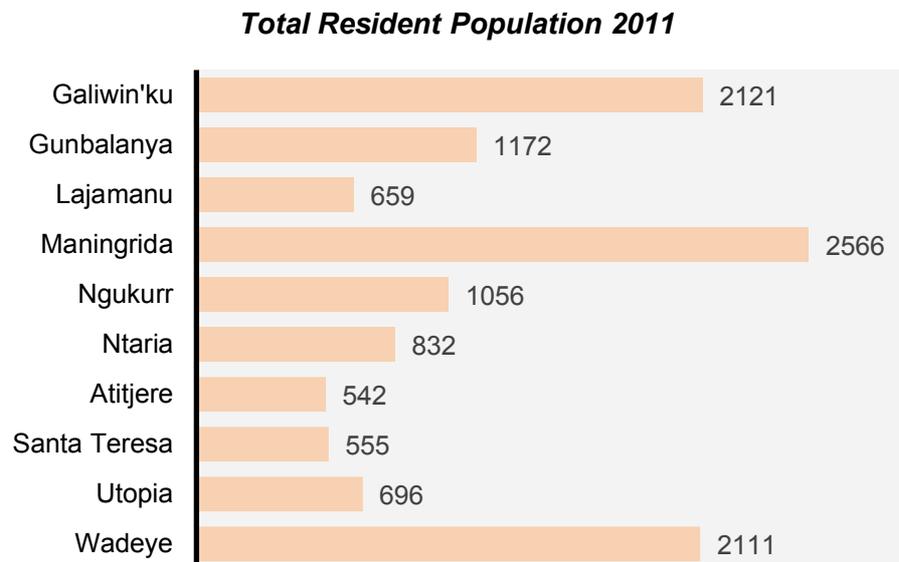
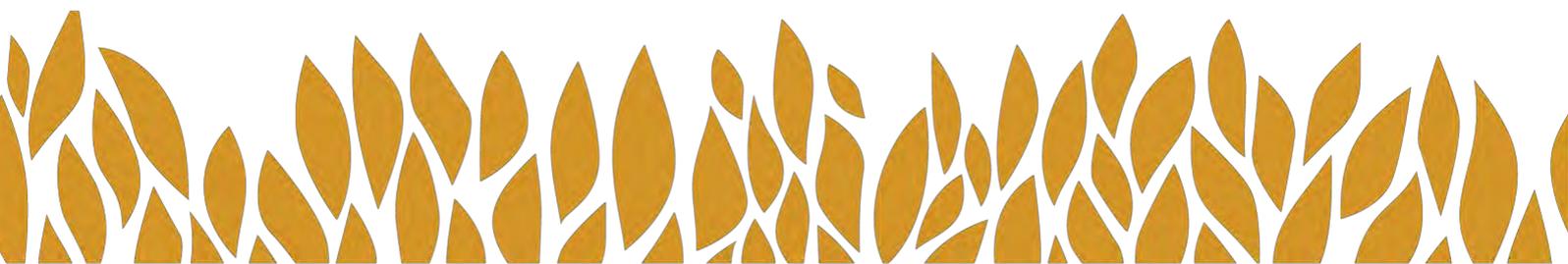


Figure 21: Total resident population by community (2011)
Source: 2011 ABS Census

Within these population numbers, the average age group percentages (Figure 22) are:

- 0–4 years (11%)
- 5–14 years (23%)
- 15–24 years (20%)
- 25+ years (46%).

Maningrida has by far the youngest population, with only 14% of the population being adults. In contrast, Gunbalanya has hardly any children aged 4 or under.



Total Resident Population 2011 by age groups

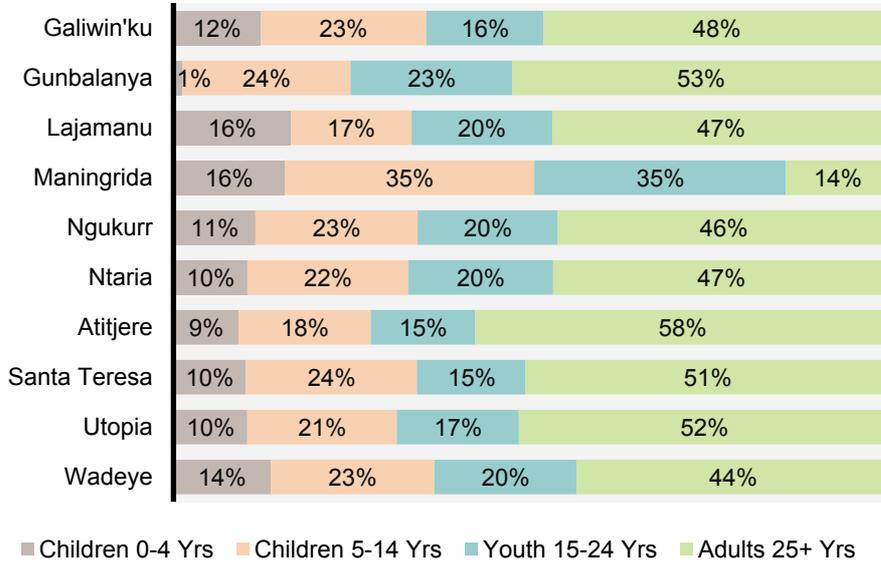


Figure 22: Total resident population by age and community (2011)
Source: 2011 ABS Census

Children have a good start in life and grow up healthy

The proportion of babies with healthy ears is 27% across all communities, which means that 73% of babies have one or more middle ear problems.

For all communities, the proportion of pregnant mothers who go for check-ups is below the Northern Territory average of 45.5%. There is little disparity between communities; however, Lajamanu has the lowest rate at 37.5%.

Pregnant mothers going to clinic for check ups (%)

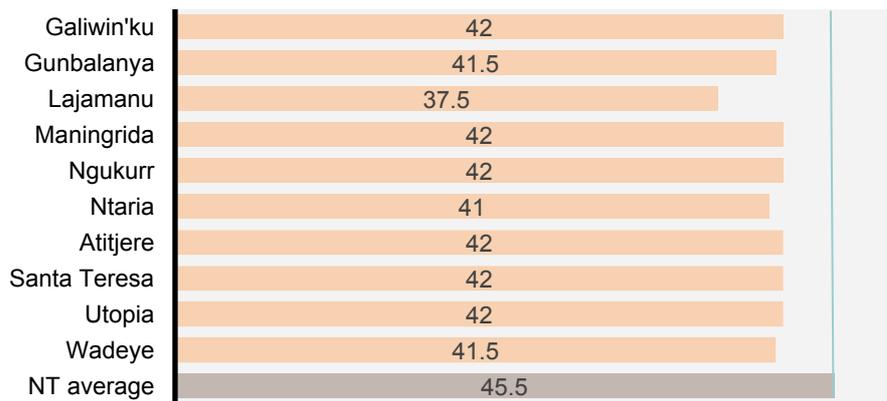
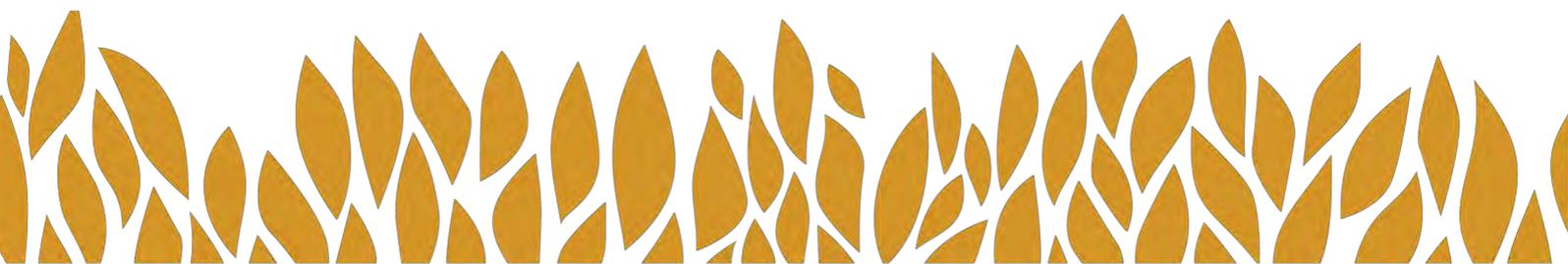


Figure 23: Percentage of pregnant mothers going for check-ups by community
Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2014



In five of the 10 communities studied, the proportion of mothers who are above 18 years of age is above or the same as the Northern Territory average. Ntaria has the highest proportion (94%). Lajamanu has the lowest (55.5%), which means that almost half of mothers have not reached 18 years of age and young mothers need more support and services.

Mothers aged 18 years and older (%)

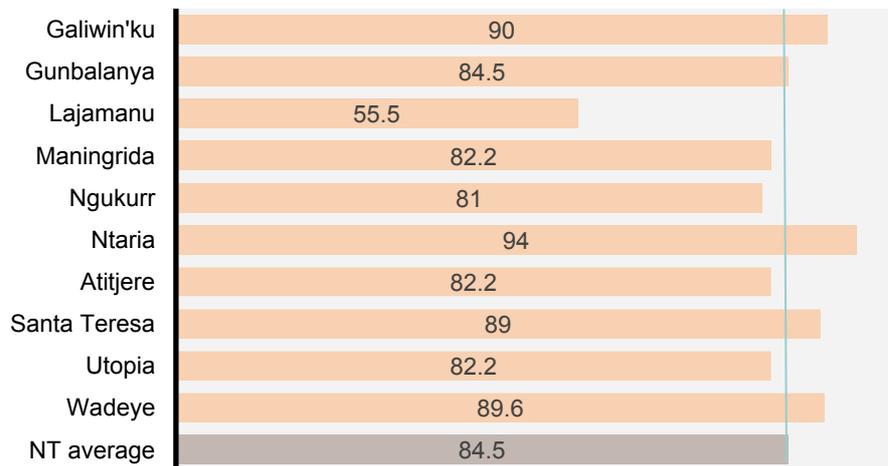


Figure 24: Percentage of mothers aged 18+ by community
 Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2014

The proportion of pregnant women who smoke varies between 49.4% and 49.9% across communities. The average in the Northern Territory is 49.9%. Tobacco use during pregnancy is associated with low birthweight and adverse perinatal health outcomes. Seven of the 10 communities are above the Northern Territory average for the proportion of healthy birthweight babies. At Maningrida, Wadeye and Ngukurr, 20–25% of babies are born with a low weight.

Healthy birthweight babies (2,000g or more) (%)

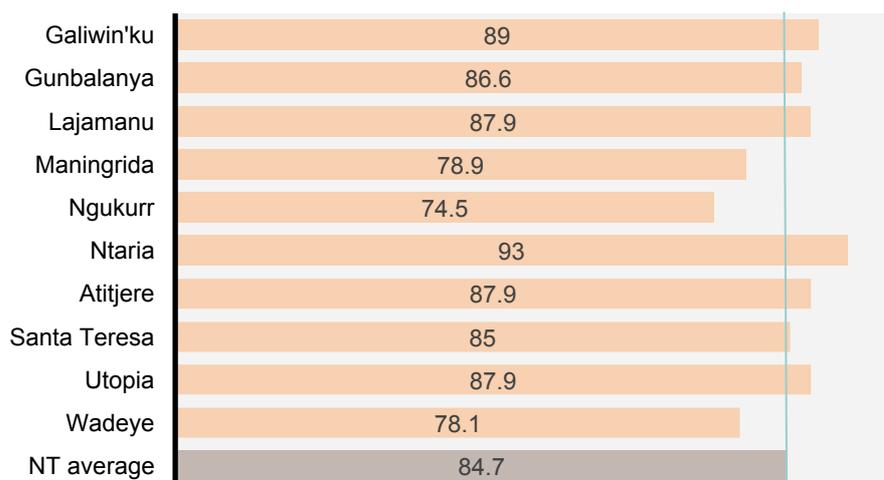
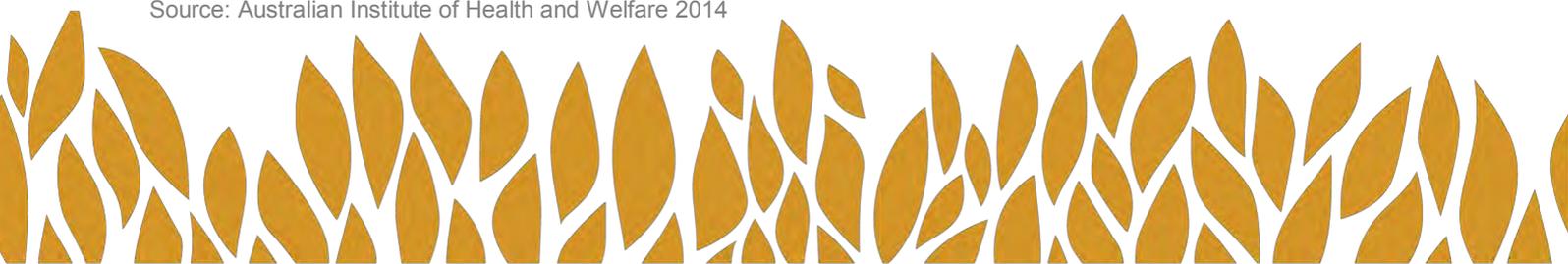


Figure 25: Percentage of healthy birthweight babies by community
 Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2014



Children engage with school and have success in their learning

School readiness is lower in all communities than the Northern Territory average (76.6% in 2012 and 63% in 2015). Between 2012 and 2015, the proportion of school-ready children has remained stable in Galiwin'ku, while it has increased in Lajamanu (+18%), Ngukurr (+16%) and Santa Teresa (+5%). It has decreased in Gunbalanya (-8%), Maningrida (-8%), Ntaria (-30%), Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya) (-3%), Utopia (-3%) and Wadeye (-9%). The 2015 data from the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) are unlikely to reflect impact from Tranche II SCfC projects that were yet to commence.

Children ready for school learning

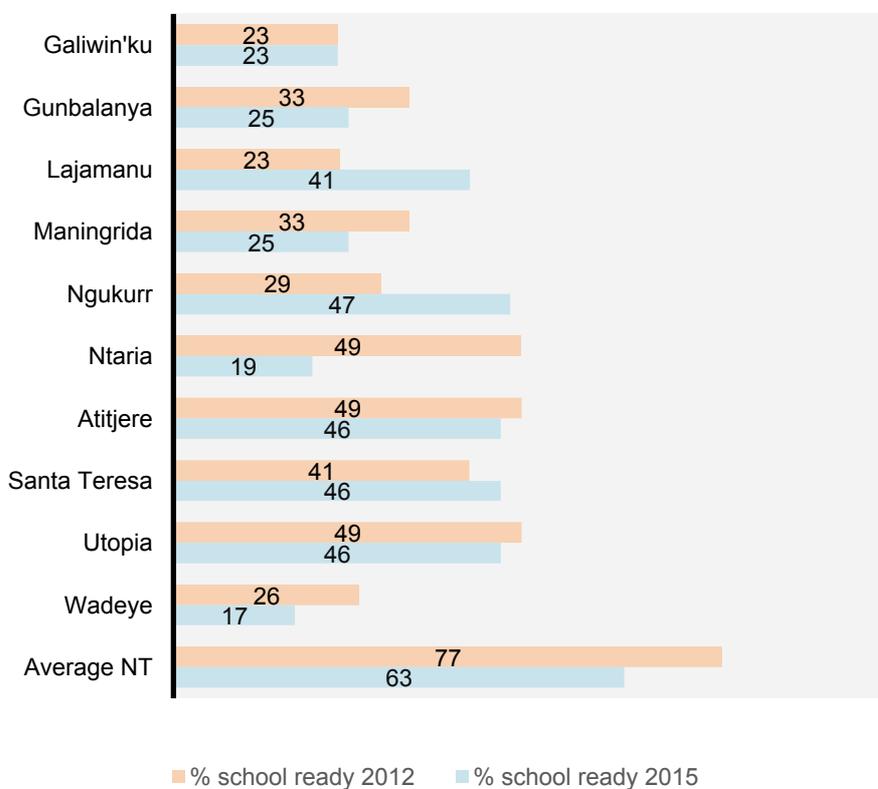
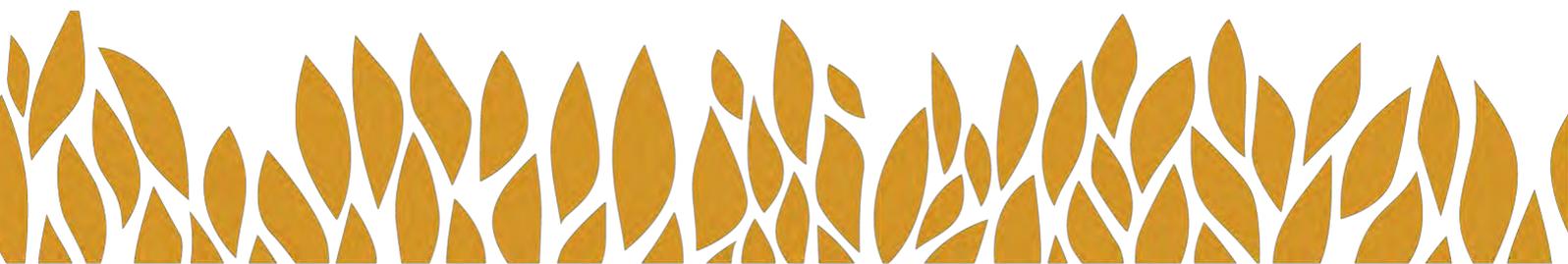


Figure 26: Percentage of children ready for school by community (AEDC data 2012 and 2015)

Source: Australian Early Development Census 2012

Note: The 2015 data from the AEDC are unlikely to reflect impact from Tranche II SCfC projects that were yet to commence.



Learning support requirements in all communities are higher than the Northern Territory average (20.9% in 2012 and 23.1% in 2015). The proportion of children needing special learning support has increased in eight of the 10 communities. Only Gunbalanya and Lajamanu have experienced a reduction. Surprisingly, an increase in the proportion of children ready for school does not necessarily equate to a reduction in special learning support needs and vice versa. Out of all the communities, Lajamanu seems to have the most positive story to tell.

Children needing special learning support

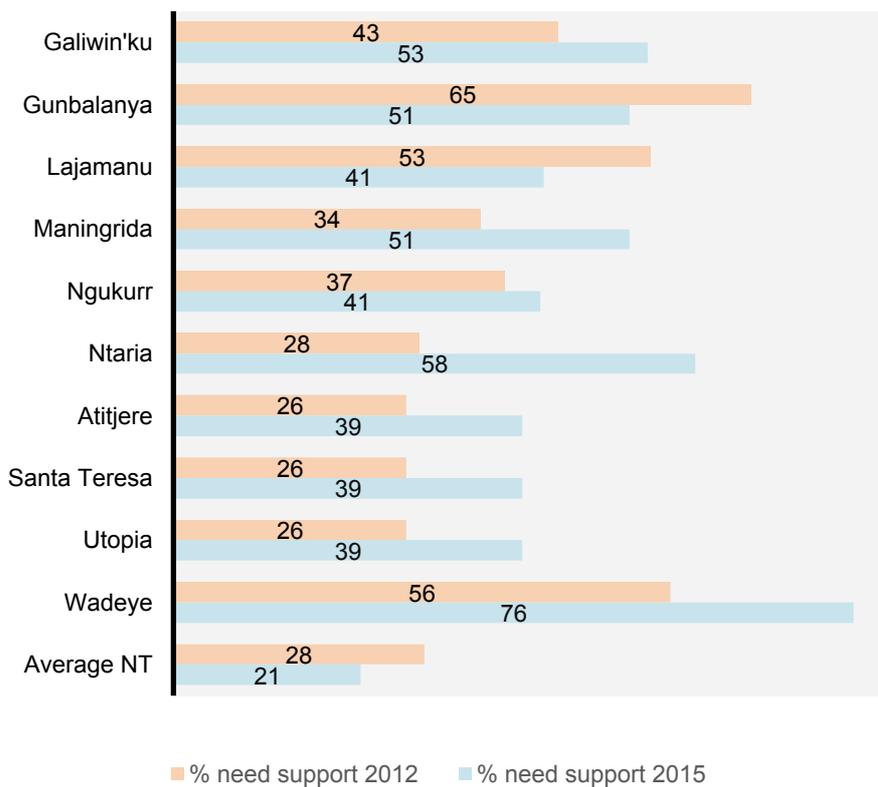
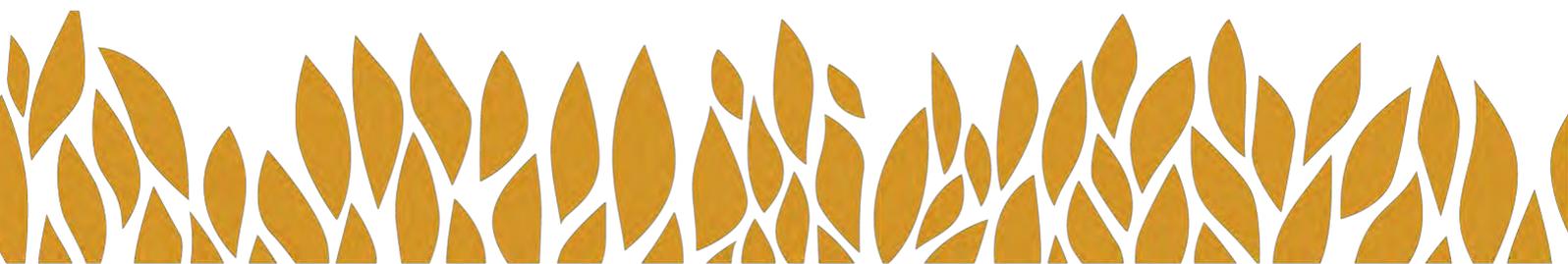


Figure 27: Percentage of children requiring special learning support by community (2012 and 2015)
 Source: Australian Early Development Census 2012
 Note: The 2015 data from the AEDC are unlikely to reflect impact from Tranche II SCfC projects that were yet to commence.



School attendance has remained fairly stable in most communities, except Santa Teresa where it grew by 28 percentage points and Galiwin'ku where it decreased by 13 percentage points.

Regular School Attendance

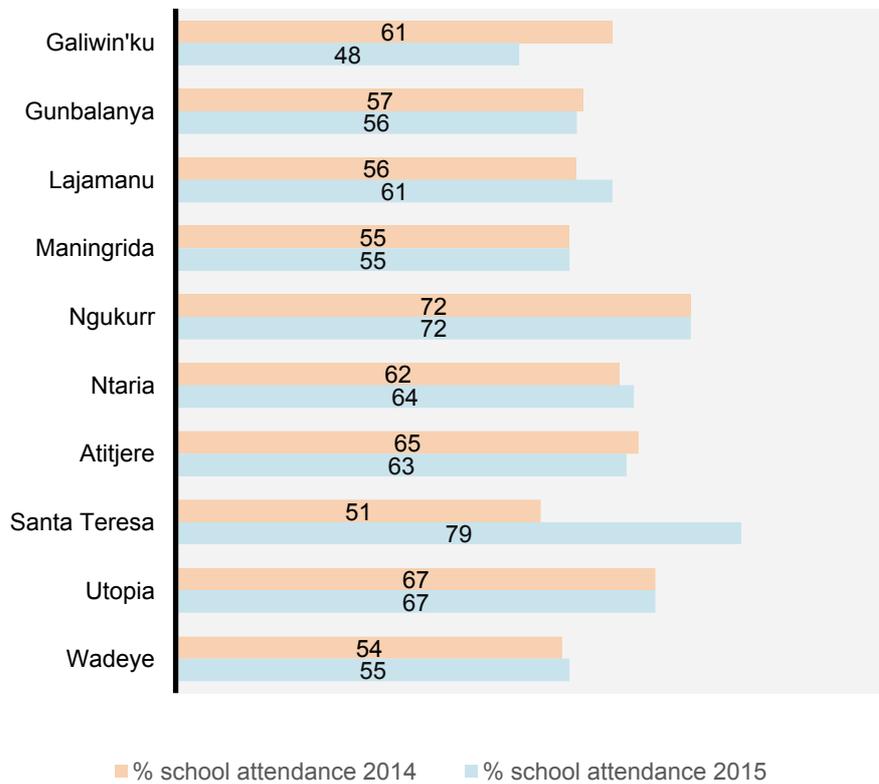
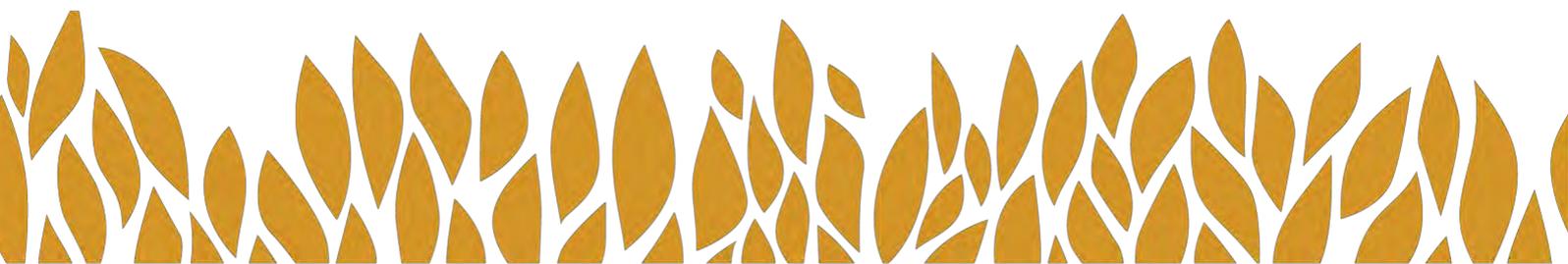


Figure 28: Percentage of children that regularly attend school by community (2014 and 2015)
 Source: Australian Early Development Census 2012
 Note: The 2015 data from the AEDC are unlikely to reflect impact from Tranche II SCfC projects that were yet to commence.



NAPLAN scores for Year 3 students indicate an improvement for most communities between 2014 and 2015 in both numeracy and reading, with the exception of Gunbalanya, Ngukurr and Wadeye for numeracy.

The 2015 highest numeracy percentage is found in Lajamanu, while levels of literacy are rather similar across most other communities. In 2015, Gunbalanya had significantly lower levels of literacy and numeracy than other communities.

% with NAPLAN scores above national minimum standard - Y3

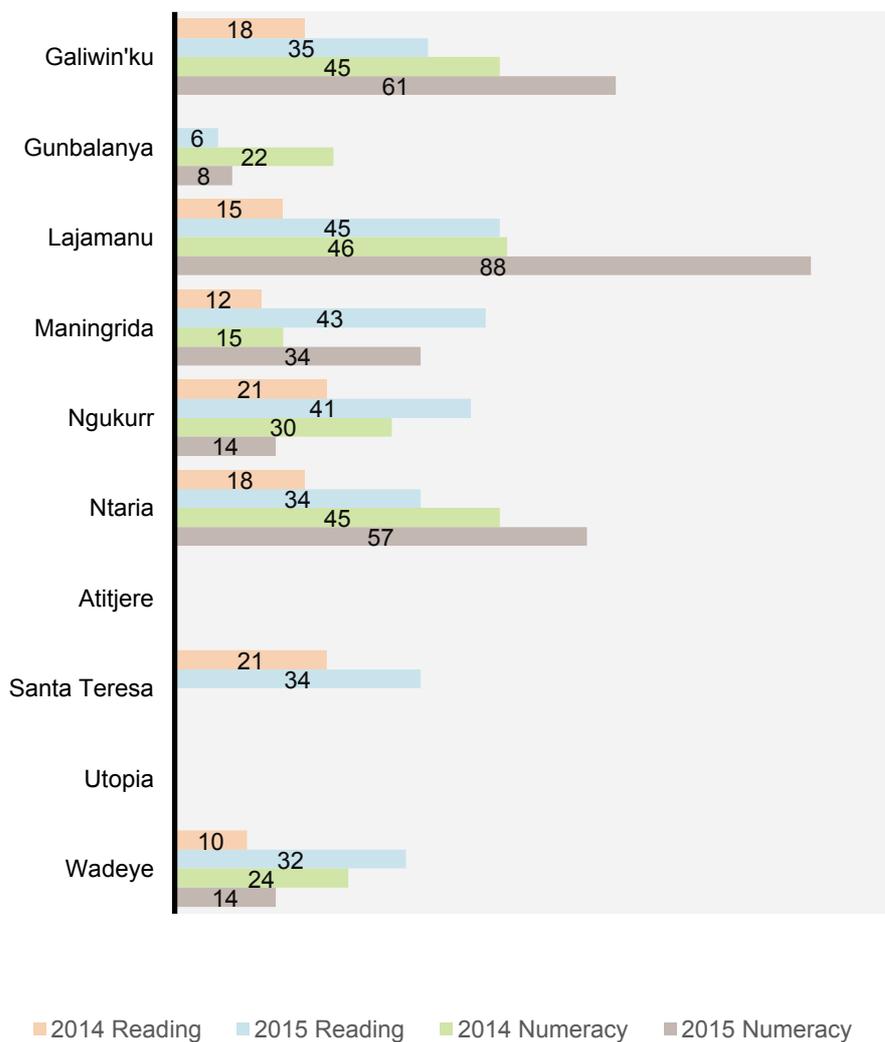
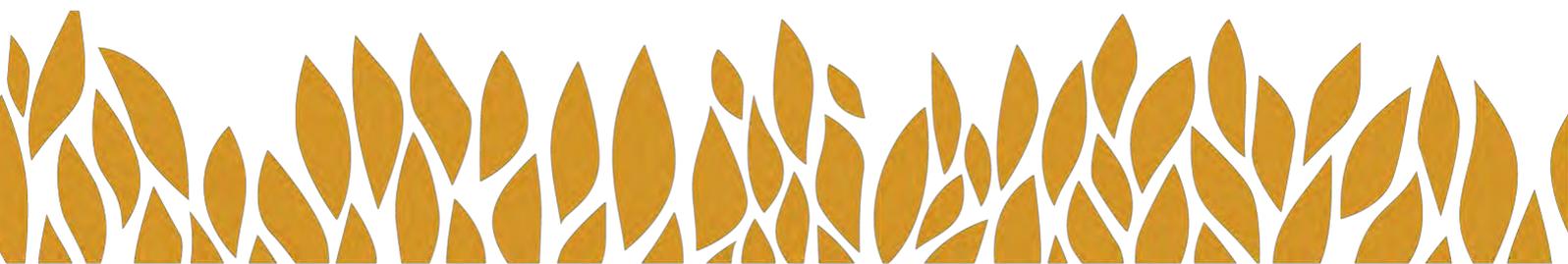


Figure 29: Percentage of Year 3 children with NAPLAN scores above minimum standard by community (2014 and 2015)

Note: The 2015 data from the AEDC are unlikely to reflect impact from Tranche II SCfC projects that were yet to commence. Data missing for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya) and Utopia. 2014 reading data missing for Gunbalanya. Numeracy data missing for Santa Teresa



In 2015, there were more Year 5 students who obtained NAPLAN above standard in most communities, except Gunbalaya, Maningrida and Ntaria for numeracy.

The 2015 levels of reading are significantly higher in Santa Teresa than other communities, and, once again, Lajamanu presents the highest levels of numeracy.

% with NAPLAN scores above national minimum standard - Y5

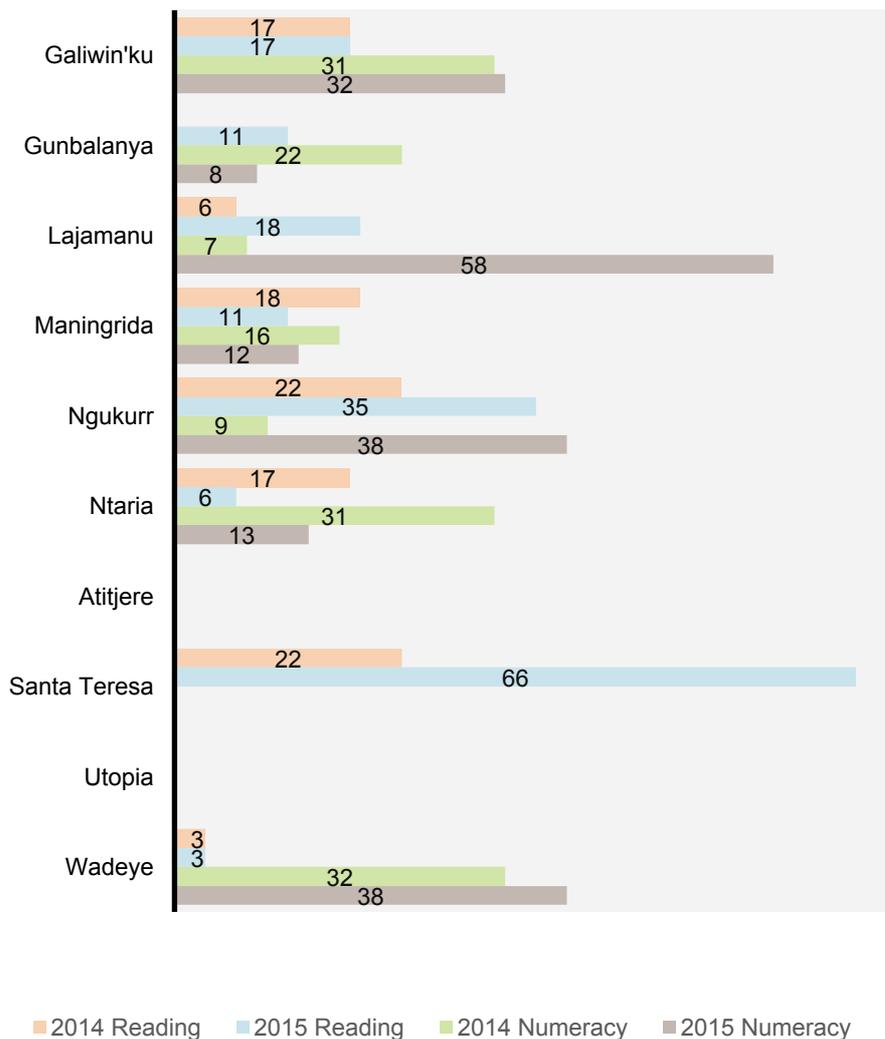
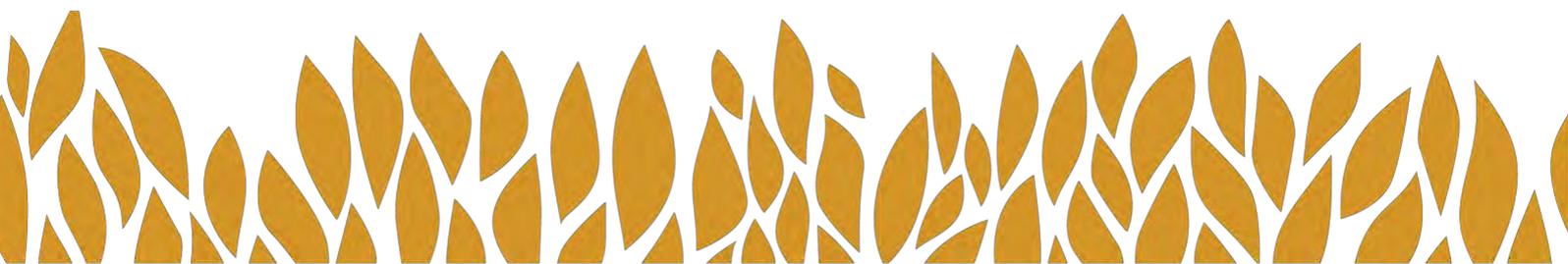


Figure 30: Percentage of Year 5 children with NAPLAN scores above minimum standard by community (2014 and 2015)

Note: The 2015 data from the AEDC are unlikely to reflect impact from Tranche II SCfC projects that were yet to commence. Data missing for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya) and Utopia. 2014 reading data missing for Gunbalanya. Numeracy data missing for Santa Teresa



Numeracy is in decline for Year 7 students in Gunbalanya, Lajamanu, Santa Teresa and Wadeye. However, Galiwin'ku, Ngukurr and Ntaria all show considerable improvements in numeracy. Reading has improved in most communities for which data is available, except Galiwin'ku and Ngukurr.

Ntaria, Ngukurr and Santa Teresa have higher levels of numeracy in 2015, while literacy is particularly high in Santa Teresa.

% with NAPLAN scores above national minimum standard - Y7

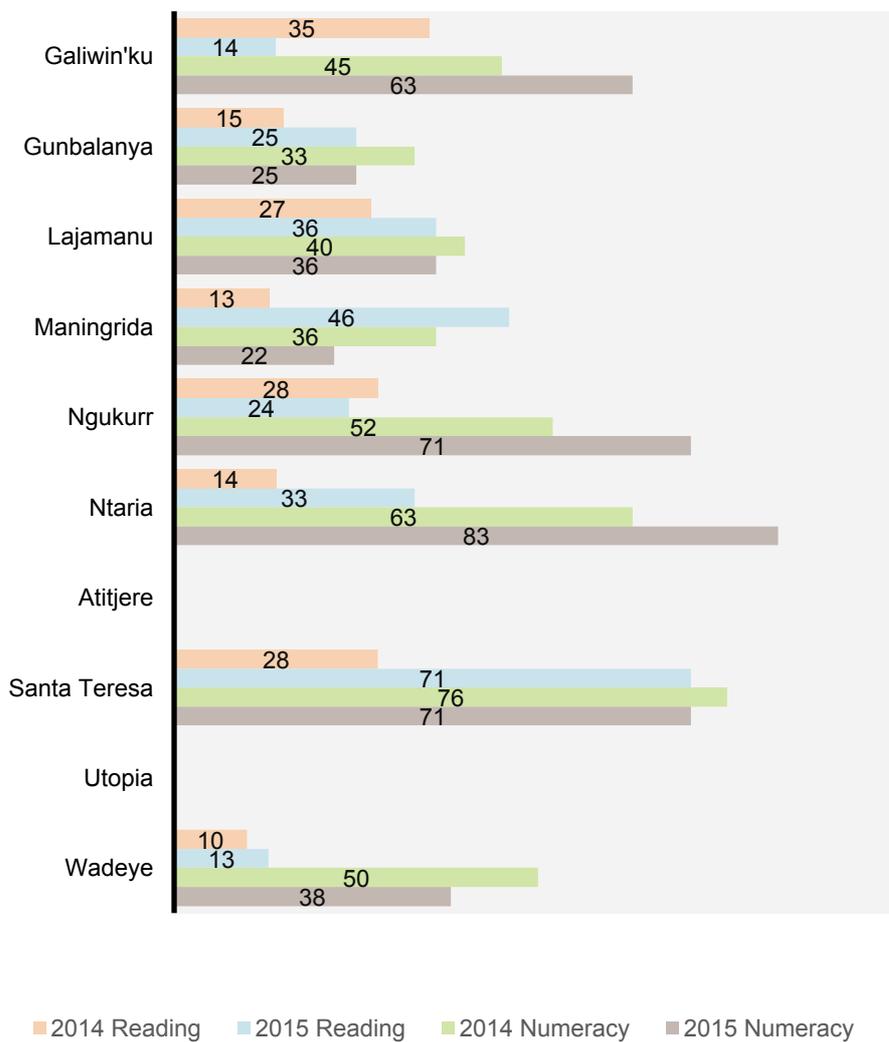
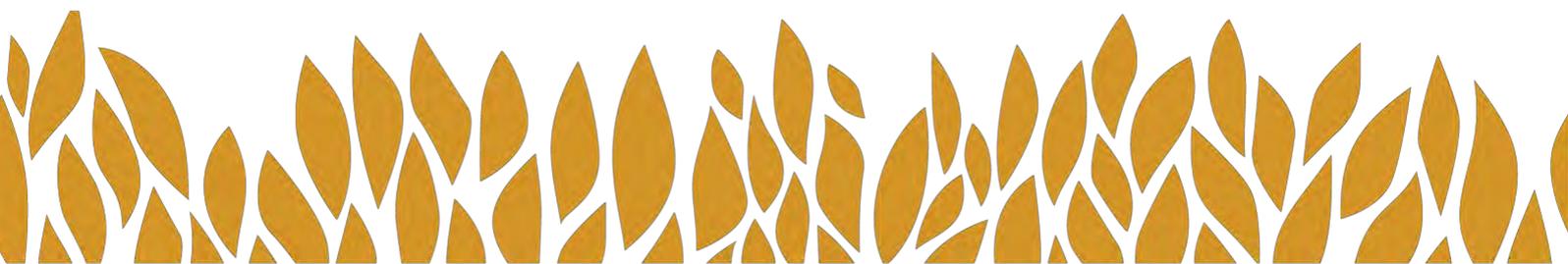


Figure 31: Percentage of Year 7 children with NAPLAN scores above minimum standard by community (2014 and 2015)

Note: The 2015 data from the AEDC are unlikely to reflect impact from Tranche II SCfC projects that were yet to commence. Data missing for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya) and Utopia.



For Year 9 students, there is limited data available. The data that has been collected shows improvements in reading and numeracy, except in Maningrida where numeracy declined.

Wadeye has a significantly higher proportion of Y9 students above national standard for numeracy.

% with NAPLAN scores above national minimum standard - Y9

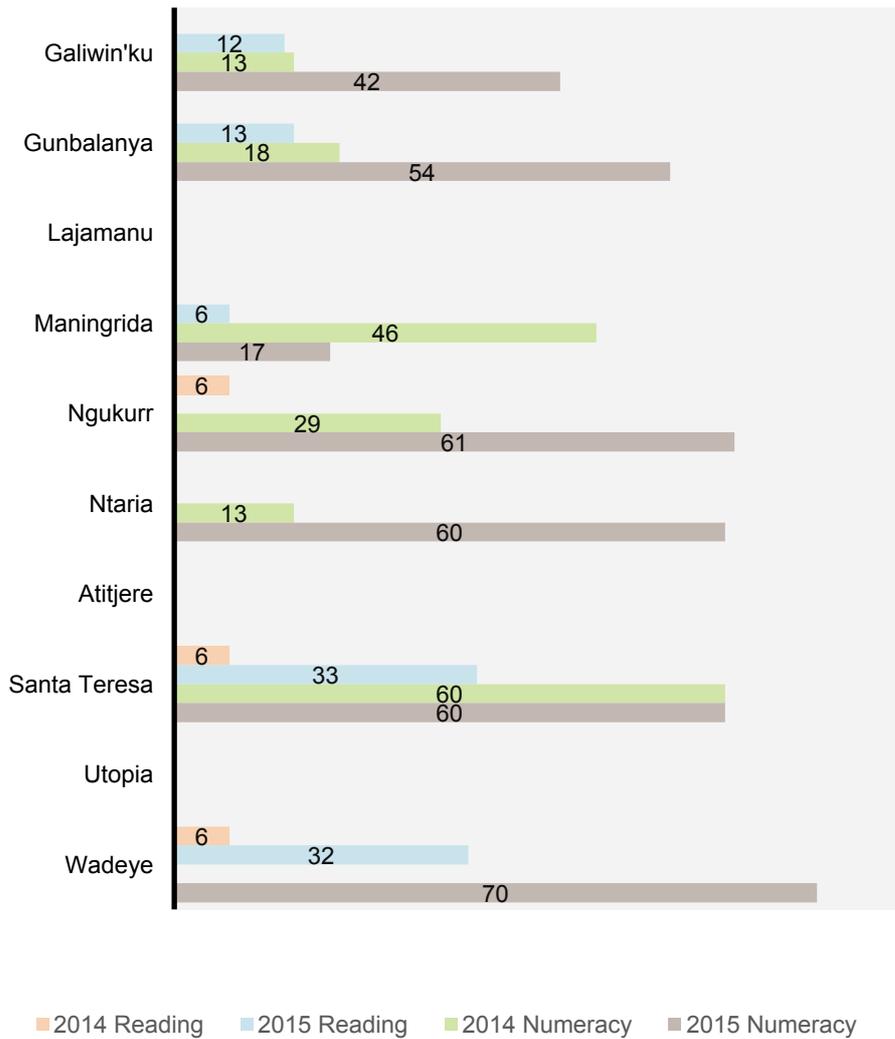


Figure 32: Percentage of Year 9 children with NAPLAN scores above minimum standard by community (2014 and 2015)

Note: The 2015 data from the AEDC are unlikely to reflect impact from Tranche II SCfC projects that were yet to commence. Data missing for Lajamanu, Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya) and Utopia. 2014 reading data missing for Galiwin'ku, Gunbalanya, Maningrida, Ngukurr and Ntaria. 2015 reading data missing for Ngukurr and Ntaria.

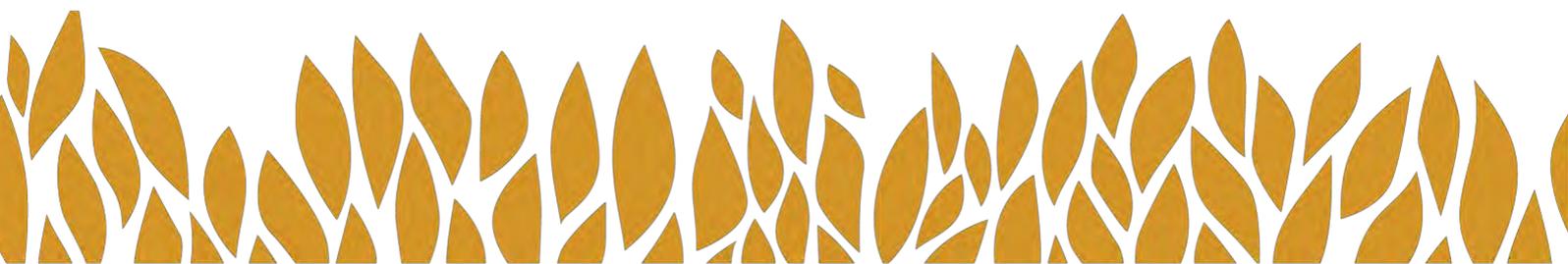
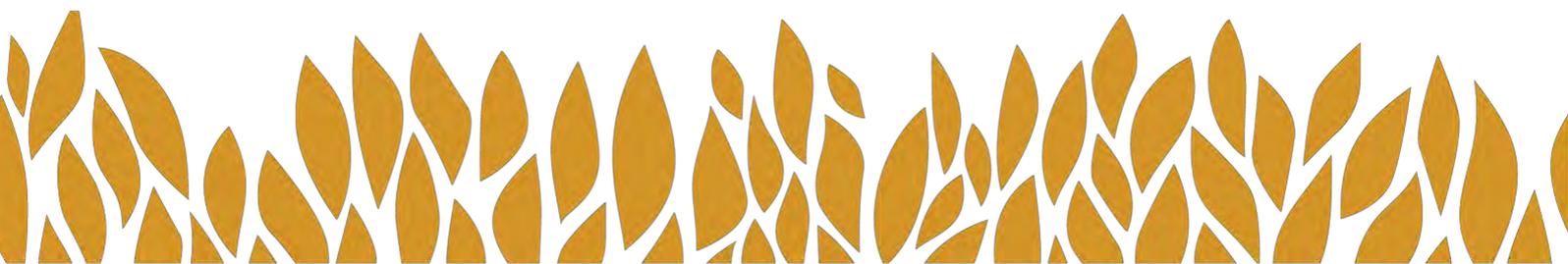


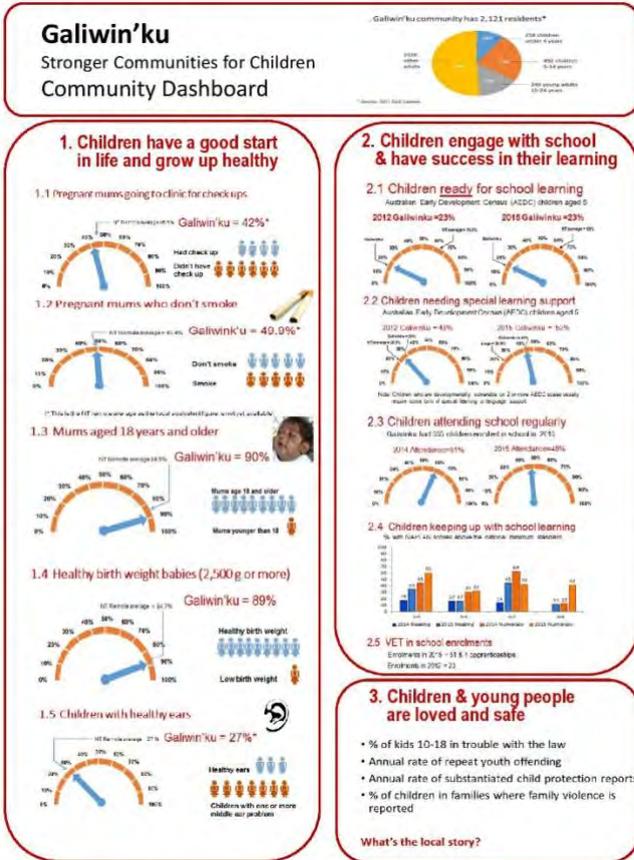
Table 6: Number of students enrolled in VET programs by community (2012 and 2015)
 Source: Australian Government My School <www.myschool.edu.au>

This table provides an overview of the number of students enrolled in VET programs by community (2012 and 2015).

COMMUNITY	VET-in-School 2012	VET-in-School 2015
Galiwin'ku	23	51 + 4 Apprenticeships
Gunbalanya	56	57
Lajamanu	56	61
Maningrida	48 + 1 Apprenticeship	43
Ngukurr	21	8 + 1 Apprenticeship
Ntaria		23
Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya)		
Santa Teresa		40
Utopia		19
Wadeye	23	2



Dashboard Example



Data sources

Growing up healthy - a good start

This information about antenatal care, teenage mums & baby birth weights was obtained from a review of data from Remote Services Delivery sites: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2014. Health Indicators for Remote Service Delivery communities: a summary report 2003-2011. Cat. no. IHW 142. Canberra: AIHW.

On Track to start school and learn well

This information comes from the national census of children conducted each three years as they start transition (the first compulsory year of school). Formerly called the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) it is now called the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC). This census provides a picture of how groups of children are growing and developing at the community not the individual child level. The AEDC is being used a national measurement to monitor Australian children's development. The information was obtained from a copy of the Department of Education AEDI 2012 Data Report. The information of the National website does not provide a picture of all school in SCfC so we used data given to us by DOE. School principals can obtain a confidential individual school report for their local AEDC Results.

Ear Health

This information was obtained from the comprehensive health checks undertaken during the NT Emergency Intervention. AIHW NTER CHCI Audiology data (30 June 2010). The NTER Child Health Check Initiative (CHCI) was managed by CHF. include collection and maintenance of detailed data sets that were shared and reconciled through the Australian Institute of Health Welfare (AIHW). More than 5000 received ear and if needed follow up hearing (audiology) checks.

Children and young people engaged with school

This information was obtained from the Australian Government MySchool website. <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>. My School enables anyone to search detailed profiles of Australian school simply by entering a school's name, suburb or postcode. Information on the MySchool website is limited for independent schools. Information was also obtained from the recent review of remote education in the NT. This is a review of NT government schools. The Final report provides a strong commentary on the similarity of very remote schools having similar patterns of enrolment, attendance and achievement that are distinct from town schools (p47). http://www.education.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/37294/A-Share-in-the-Future-The-Review-of-Indigenous-Education-in-the-Northern-Territory.pdf

Recent AG information sheets on individual school attendance will be useful to sites but are not available to Menzies

Smoking

Tobacco use during pregnancy is associated with low birthweight and adverse perinatal health outcomes. In children, exposure to second-hand smoke (SHS) from tobacco contributes to lower respiratory tract illness, otitis media and chronic middle ear effusion, and is associated with an increased risk of childhood asthma. Medicare Local included maps of smoking in pregnancy prevalence, and note there is variation in smoking rates and intensity across the NT. Rural Central Australia appears to have lower rates (15 to 34%) than their rural northern neighbours (37.8 - 56.2%). <http://www.ntmi.org.au/publications/northern-territory-medicare-local-health-issues-2014>. We have included the estimate rate of 53% discussed by Professor David Thomas in recent press releases about remote tobacco consumption.

Tobacco smoking was responsible for 20 per cent of national Indigenous deaths and 12.1 per cent of the total national Indigenous burden of disease in 2009. Indigenous smoking rates are falling, but nearly 50% of Indigenous adults smoke, more than double the smoking prevalence among all Australians. Smoking continues to be the largest preventable cause of death in Australia. Associate Professor David Thomas chairs the Northern Territory Tobacco Advisory Committee which reports annually on the state of smoking in the NT. He notes: Smoking during pregnancy is three times more prevalent among Indigenous Australian women than non-Indigenous Australian women (52% v 15%). There is a similar increased risk of indoor exposure to tobacco smoke for Indigenous children aged 0-14 years compared with non-Indigenous children (28% v 9%). Source Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health performance framework 2005 report: detailed analyses. Canberra: AIHW, 2009. (AIHW Cat. No. IHW 22.) <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10664>

Appendix C – Results data

Quantitative data from online survey

Table 7: Number of LCB members by community

This table summarises the number of LCB members by community.

	Jan-Jun '15	July-Dec '15	Jan-Jun '16	Jul-Dec '16	Jan-Jun '17
Maningrida		4	6	6	6
Gunbalanya		10	12	10	12
Utopia		30	58	73	89
Ngukurr	25	12	12	8	14
Wadeye	11	12	12	10	
Galiwin'ku	20	18	12	15	15
Lajamanu			16	15	15
Ntaria/Tjuwanpa	14	15	16	16	12
Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya)		20	29	24	24
Santa Teresa	7		8	8	
Total	77	121	173	185	195

Note: Missing data for Wadeye (Jan–June 2017) and Santa Teresa (July 2015 – June 2016).

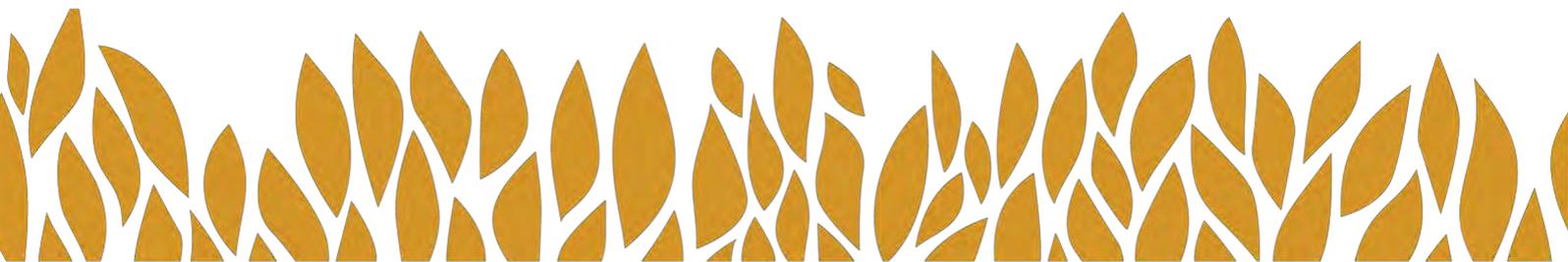


Table 8: Number of employees by community

This table summarises the number of employees by community.

	Jan-Jun '15	July-Dec '15	Jan-Jun '16	Jul-Dec '16	Jan-Jun '17
Maningrida		1	3	15	16
Gunbalanya			8	21	68
Utopia		21	56	87	75
Ngukurr	9	11	8	28	15
Wadeye	3	10	20	28	
Galiwin'ku	46	52	22	83	35
Lajamanu			4	1	11
Ntaria/Tjuwanpa	2	8	7	7	25
Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya)		6	3	3	33
Santa Teresa	8		18	12	31
Total	68	109	149	285	309

Table 9: Number of employees by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Status

This table summarises the number of SCfC employees by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status.

	Jan-Jun '15	July-Dec '15	Jan-Jun '16	Jul-Dec '16	Jan-Jun '17	Total
Indigenous	64	81	120	244	236	745
Non-indigenous	4	28	29	41	73	175

Note: Missing data for Wadeye (Jan-June 2017).

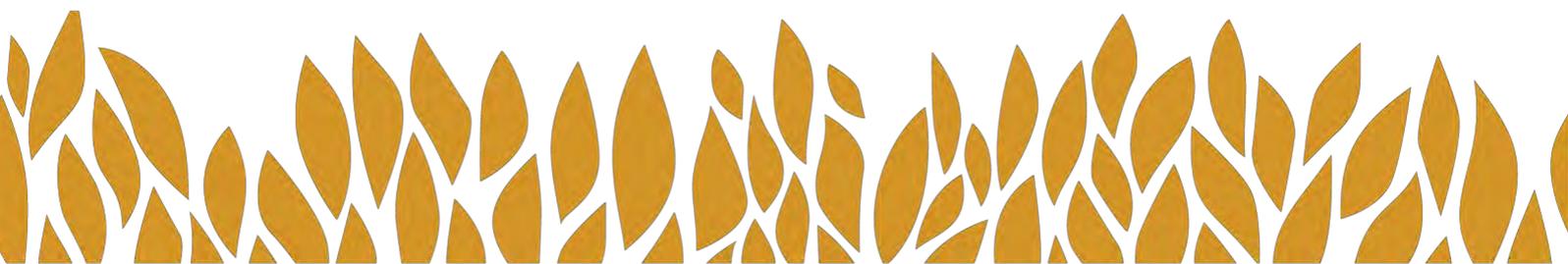


Table 10: Number of occurrences of challenges in developing the community plan

This table summarises the number of occurrences of challenges experienced by communities in developing the community plan.

Challenges of working in remote communities (housing for staff)	7
Forming the Local Community Board (making sure right governance for cultural structures)	6
Delays in getting the activity running in the community	6
Challenge of working in remote communities (space for SCfC office/leasing offices)	6
Delays between Local Board Member sign off and Government sign off	5
Government to support the community plan (took time to sign off the community plan)	4
Participation in the development of the plan by community members	4
Forming the local Community Board (took time for community to agree the members)	3
Finding a suitable Facilitating Partner Co-ordinator	3
Other Specify	3
Local Community Board members to support the community plan (took time to sign off the community plan)	2

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

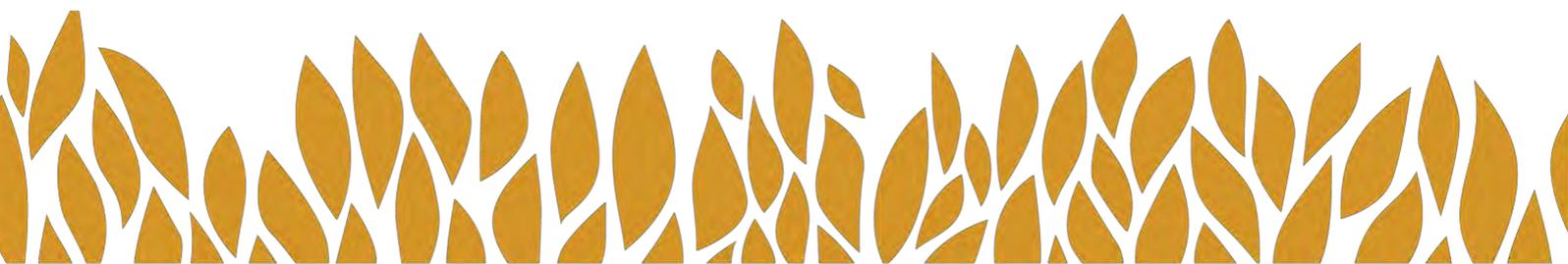


Table 11: Number of occurrences of achievements for SCfC when the community plan was finalised

This table summarises the number of occurrences of achievements experienced by communities when the community plan was finalised.

Local community board members working together with community stakeholders and partners	8
Local community board members working together with facilitating partner	8
Community-led decision-making (making decisions our way to our people)	8
Community ownership	8
Community pride	8
Community came together with a common vision (we all agree on what needs to be done)	7
Common community vision helped give direction to community stakeholders and partners on making decisions about their services (other non-indigenous workers know what community wants)	7
Community members working together with Local Community Board Members	6
Common community vision helped give direction to community members and Local Community Board on making decisions about which activities to fund (knowing what to spend money on because we had the plan)	6
Local Community Board members working together with the PMC	5
Showing a lot of effort (working hard/motivated) to make the community a better place for families	5
Local Community Board Members working together with QSSP (Ninti One/Menzies)	3
Community and PMC have a shared vision (working together two ways with government)	3
Other Specify	1

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya) and Gunbalanya.

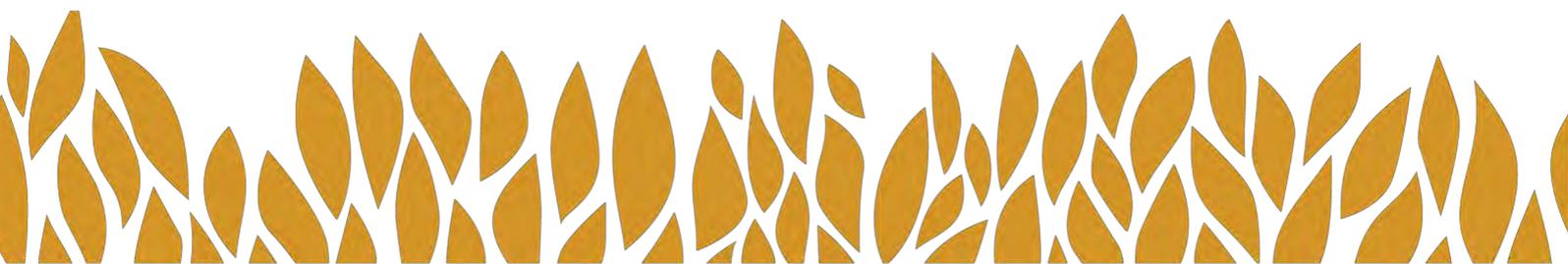


Table 12: Number of activities per community

This table summarises the number of activities per community.	
Ntaria	11
Utopia Homelands	11
Gunbalanya	7
Ngukurr	14
Wadeye	11
Lajamanu	7
Galiwin'ku	24
Santa Teresa	21
Maringrida	20

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

Table 13: Proportion of activities by the number of times they had to be revised

This table summarises the proportion of activities by the number of times they had to be revised.	
0	45%
1	6%
2	6%
3	5%
4	1%
Unrecorded	37%

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya), Gunbalanya, Ngukurr, Wadeye, Lajamanu, Galiwinku and Santa Teresa therefore won't add to 100%

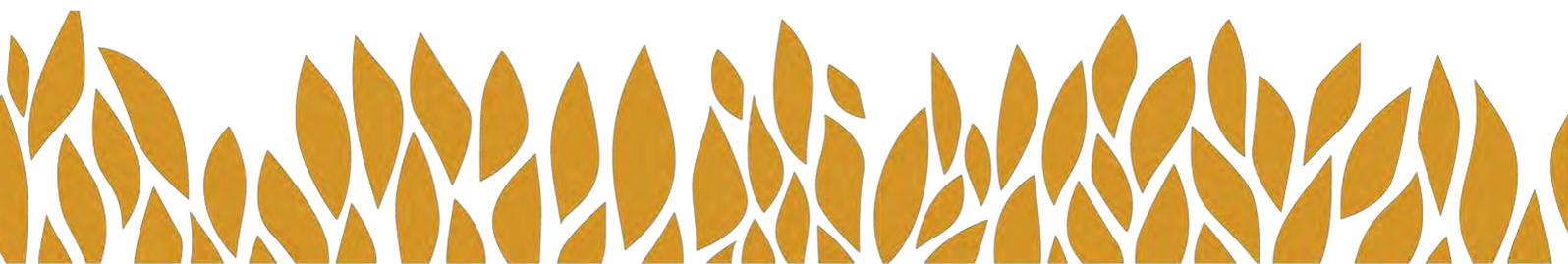


Table 14: Number of activities by the prime feature of the SCfC

This table summarises the number of activities by the prime feature of SCFC.	
Health and wellbeing	23
Supporting capacity building	17
Cultural activities/programs	17
Activities outside of school (to keep children out of trouble)	16
Education focused programs	15
Parenting programs	8
Employment/skills development	7
Early childhood development	7
Activities that generate social cohesion	7
School attendance	4
Youth leadership	3
Safety programs	2

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

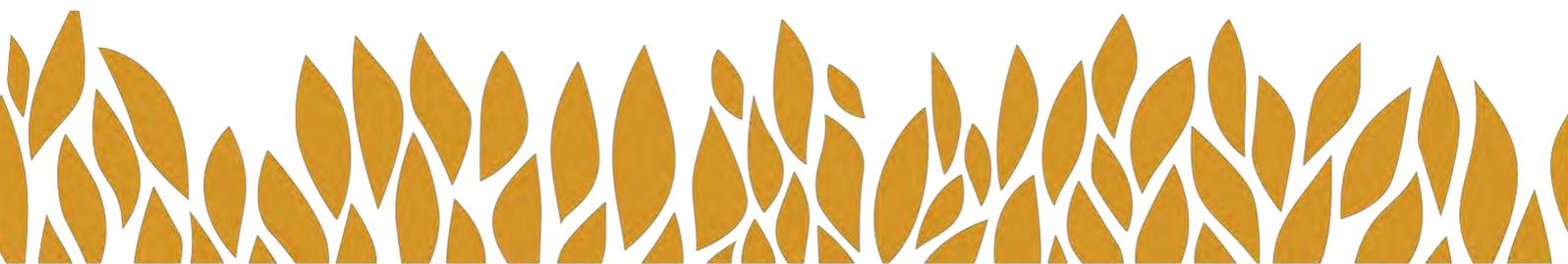


Table 15: Phase of activities

This table summarises the percentage of activities by the phase they are at, by community.

	Completed	In progress	Approved but yet to start	Awaiting approval	In preparation for approval
Ntaria	18%	73%	9%		
Utopia Homelands	9%	91%			
Gunbalanya	57%	29%	14%		
Ngukurr	50%	36%	7%	7%	
Wadeye	18%	45%	36%		
Lajamanu	29%	71%			
Galiwin'ku	71%	29%			
Santa Teresa	33%	43%	24%		
Maningrida	35%	55%	5%	5%	

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

Table 16: Proportion of activities that were funded more than once

This table summarises the proportion of activities that were funded more than once.

Ntaria	18%
Utopia Homelands	64%
Gunbalanya	29%
Ngukurr	0%
Wadeye	45%
Lajamanu	0%
Galiwin'ku	63%
Santa Teresa	29%
Maningrida	50%

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

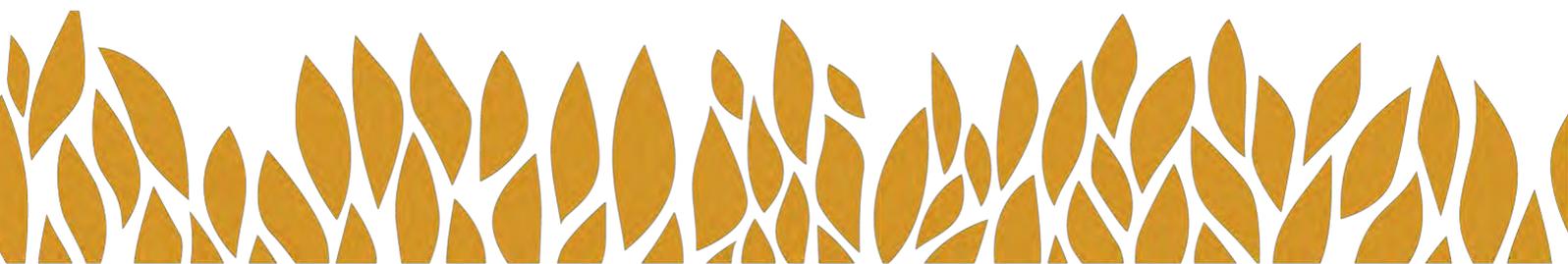


Table 17: Average number of times activities were funded, for those which were funded more than once

This table summarises the average number of times activities were funded, for those which were funded more than once.

Ntaria	3.0
Utopia Homelands	2.1
Gunbalanya	2.0
Ngukurr	0
Wadeye	2.0
Lajamanu	0
Galiwin'ku	2.7
Santa Teresa	2.5
Maningrida	6.8

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

Table 18: SCfC funding

This table summarises the percentage of activities that are fully funded, receive top up funding or are not funded by SCFC.

	Yes- SCfC now fully funding	Yes – SCfC now topping up funding	No
Ntaria	27%		73%
Utopia Homelands		18%	82%
Gunbalanya	14%	14%	43%
Ngukurr	7%		93%
Wadeye			91%
Lajamanu	0%	14%	86%
Galiwin'ku	17%	17%	67%
Santa Teresa	14%	5%	76%
Maningrida	35%	25%	40%

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

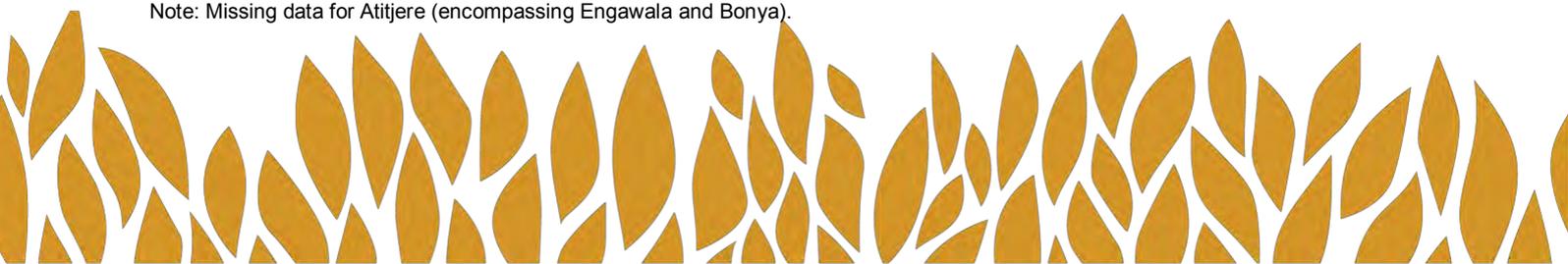


Table 19: Proportion of occurrences of challenges in line with activities

This table summarises the proportion of occurrences of challenges experienced by communities in line with activities.

Logistics of providing services in remote communities	51%
Managing the supplier to provide a quality service (way community want it/way it works in community)	25%
Delays in getting the activity running in community	25%
Identifying outcomes that were measurable to evaluate in the activity	21%
Other Specify	17%
None of these	17%
Participation in activity by community	9%
Community stakeholders or partners to support this activity	8%
Finding a supplier to provide this activity	8%
Government to support this activity (sign off activity plan)	7%
Service providers to support this activity	5%
Similar activities have not been adapted for Aboriginal people / not culturally safe	5%
Delays between Local Board Member sign off and Government sign off	5%
No evidence based activities to address the community problem	2%
Activity was not maximising community strengths	2%
Local Community Board Members to support the activity (sign off activity plan)	2%

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya)

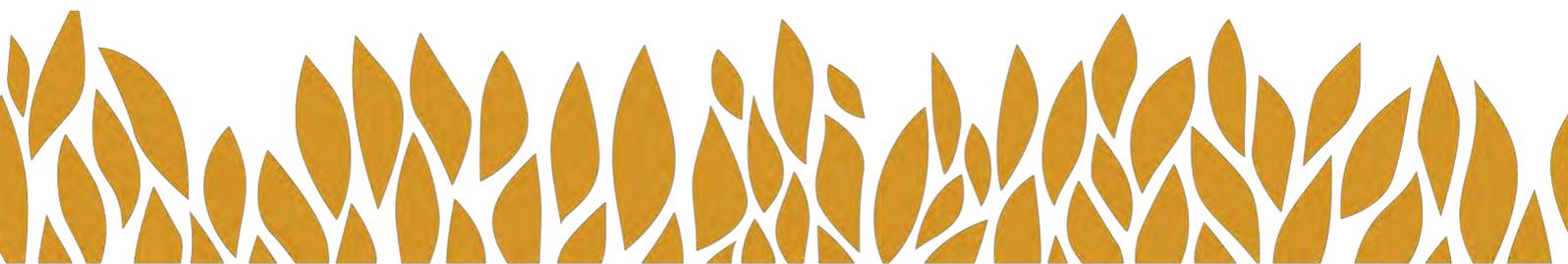


Table 20: Alignment of activities with SCfC outcomes

This table summarises the proportion of activities that align with SCFC outcomes.

Build the capacity of Indigenous organisations to deliver these services	69%
Build community capacity to lead, plan and prioritise services that children and families need	55%
Safer families and communities	54%
Support the nurturing of young children	54%
Support young people to attend school and gain an education	52%
Support children to be school ready	40%
Provide children, young people and families opportunities for participation in cultural events	38%
Other Specify (if not related in IAS objective)	9%
None of these	0%

Table 21: % of occurrences of outcomes in line with activities, by community

This table summarises the percentage of occurrences of outcomes in line with activities, by community.

	Safety	Nurturing Young Children	Participation in cultural events	School ready	Education	Community Capacity	Indigenous Organisation Capacity	Other
Ntaria	45%	9%	27%	0%	45%	36%	9%	27%
Utopia Homelands	45%	91%	64%	82%	73%	91%	91%	0%
Gunbalanya	86%	43%	86%	43%	57%	71%	57%	0%
Ngukurr	86%	93%	71%	79%	93%	93%	43%	0%
Wadeye	82%	45%	36%	18%	9%	100%	100%	0%
Lajamanu	71%	71%	43%	29%	57%	71%	14%	29%
Galiwin'ku	17%	38%	75%	33%	46%	63%	46%	13%
Santa Teresa	57%	43%	52%	24%	57%	38%	29%	5%
Maningrida	55%	65%	30%	40%	35%	80%	5%	10%

Note: Missing data for Atitjere (encompassing Engawala and Bonya).

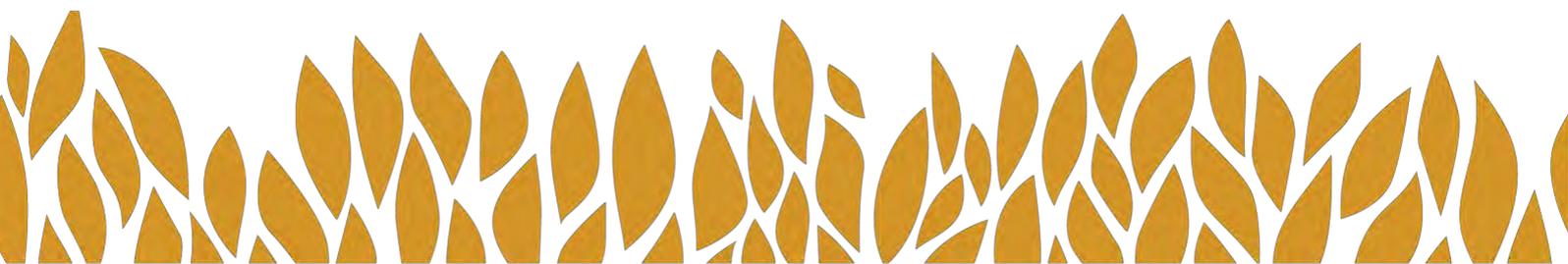
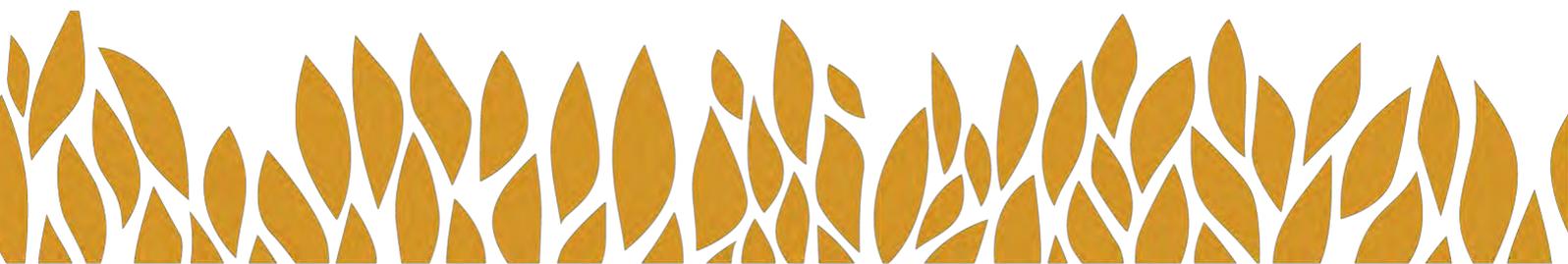


Table 22: Proportion of occurrences of achievements in line with activities

This table summarises the proportion of occurrences of achievements in line with activities.	
Community Ownership	63%
Strengths based practice	63%
Community pride	63%
Community-led decision-making	61%
Improving the way services are delivered in community to be more coordinated, efficient or effective	46%
Improving the way services are delivered in community to be more culturally safe	40%
Value for money	38%
Local Community Board Members working together with service providers	37%
Local community board members working together with community stakeholders and partners	37%
Evidence based practice	36%
Innovative or new services	35%
Local Community Board Members working together with facilitating partner	34%
Community members working together with Local Community Board Members	29%
Holding service providers accountable to community for service delivery	25%
Other Specify	10%
Local Community Board Members working together with QSSP (Ninti One/Menzies)	7%
None of these	2%



How do we know what services we need?

- Community surveys
- Criteria developed
- Workshops
- Local knowledge
- Service mapping
- Board are the decision-makers
- Knowing what is needed takes time
- Value the board – they have the experience
- Time to consult everyone
- Keeping focused on needs
- Listening to soft voices
- Strong vision – putting it first
- Feedback about services (loop)
- Information from the community
- Experts from members/outside
- Pushing through some resistance meetings and talking – supporting all
- Model puts us in the right place

**LCB – What have we learnt about ownership and independence?**

What pulls us apart:

- Based on individuals – how to get them to work together?
- They have their own agenda, not a community agenda – this creates division
- Influencing community to think their way
- No recognition of cultural governance
- Not acknowledged (board)
- Reconciliation: Words, no action
- We recommend, then they change it, the community get wild because it is different from what they agreed to
- They were proud
- Others steal ideas
- Disadvantage
- Manipulation
- Advantage
- No support
- Recognition of skills gained and recognition of board skills (DEGREE)
- PhD students never recognise us
- Not listening
- Not taking us seriously
- They are quick to judge on what they see without understanding the story
- Changes in policy, paperwork
- Read and write
- Process
- More training
- Taking away empowerment when someone new comes along
- Reporting back to government – language too hard
- Translating between government and the community
- Not using simple language
- Changing decisions
- Somethings are supported, some not
- Some people will have problems
- Better communication
- Positive understanding

Cultural awareness – community level

- Don't understand the diversity/dynamics of community
- RESPECT US
- Have Traditional Owners involved in decisions time
- Proper consultation
- Time
- Good gender balance
- Sometimes Traditional Owners are against us (LCB)
- Wrong info from service providers/Balanda (Non-Indigenous)
- Outsiders come in with their own agenda

What makes it work?

- Strong board
- Strong community members
- Elders and Traditional Owners working together
- Staff commitment
- Having different age groups
- Set up framework
- Guidelines
- Agreements/unity
- Interpreters

How can we improve?

- Good relationships with agencies
- Strong voice
- Traditional Owners make sure they understand
- Time to let everyone know
- Community feedback
- Agreements
- Elders
- Young ones learn in our footprints
- Strong voices as one

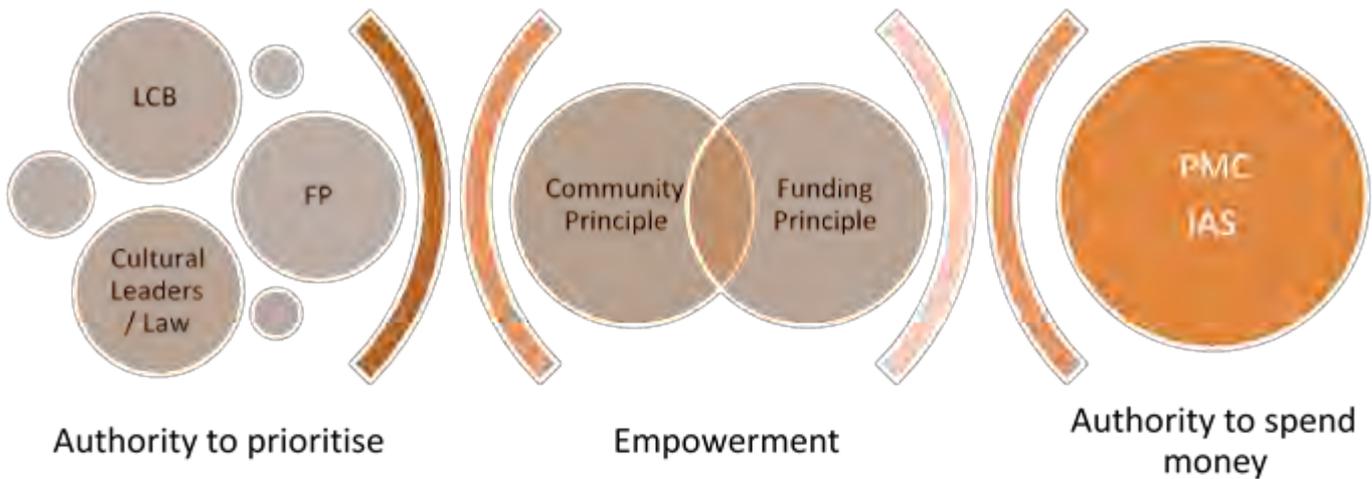
What Works?**Working together, flexibility, adaptability****How can the program improve?**

- Better communication
- Respect each other
- Process of reporting easier
- Acknowledging our strengths
- Stop moving the goal posts when we get it right
- Basic – simple, understandable
- Where decisions are made – ultimately made by DPINK
- Creative writing – how you propose it
- Support in writing it – meet funders
- Simple plain language for LCB – but government-speak for approval
- Breaks confidence to LCB when confused
- Funding principle (authority on money)
- Community principle (authority of purpose)
- Power of program is that LCB approve it, not PMC
- Culture trips – culture VEB – community determined control and make decisions (integrity mechanism and empower)
- Difference on value (best use of money)
- Difference in value of evidence
- Local
- Funders – longer term plan
- No criteria for evidence base (Communities for Children is not an Indigenous specific program)
- Disconnect in PMC and FC guidelines/you have to make work on ground
- FP is middle man
- Ninti One help find evidence base
- Time to build momentum
- Build in expertise
- Locally based
- Pilot things and experiment

FP – What have we learnt about evidence based and strengths based?

How do you manage the tensions between strengths based and evidenced based?

- Ultimately, where the decision is made it is not in community, it is by PMC (more agreement by Tranche II than Tranche I, who see PMC as a reviewer not as an approver)
- Get support in writing by meeting with funders / contract managers – take them on the journey too (more opportunity to do this in Tranche I than Tranche II)
- Simple plain language for the LCB to understand what has to be changed to government-speak for PMC to understand for approval
- Breaks down the confidence of the LCB when they are confused between the community version plain language and the actual activity application that is technical
- Ninti One help find the evidence base for those who can't find it themselves
- When there is no evidence base, time is needed to build momentum for a program that is not easily seen to be understood
- Need to bring in external expertise to innovate
- Need it to be locally based
- Need a pilot to learn



The power of the SCfC model is that the LCB, not PMC, identify, approve and monitor quality of services. The community is determined to control and make decisions but must be truly empowered to do so. When they are empowered, an 'integrity mechanism' fires and the results are better outcomes from the right services being delivered to a higher standard on the ground, with service providers being held accountable for working better with community.

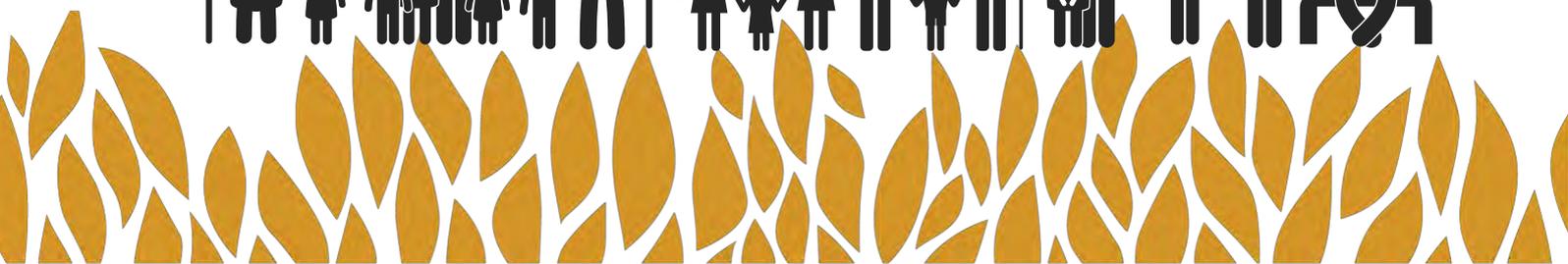
When it does not work so well, the following observations were noted:

- Differences in values between PMC/FP/LCB – what is the best way to spend the money?
- Differences in the value of the evidence base (funders vs. local) – what is good evidence and what is not (i.e. just because it works in the USA does not mean it is evidence here)?
- Differences in the value of programs that do have an evidence base and are strengths-based (culture trips) – there is an evidence base for bush trips; however, PMC value this evidence less than the community values it
- There are no criteria for what is the evidence base (e.g. the SCfC program does have criteria)
- There is a disconnect between PMC and the FPs on how to interpret the SCfC guidelines and how to make it work on the ground. (Some FPs are more skilled at arguing for the evidence base in their activity than others or joining the dots for PMC)

The FP is the intermediary, playing an interpretative role between the LCB and the PMC. To make it work, they need to be skilled at communicating effectively with community and with government. (Some are good at one or the other; some at both.)

This table provides an overview of the impact time, proximity, consistency and skill of the FP coordinator has on the SCFC program.

TIME	PROXIMITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government approval slows down the processes and momentum • Need time for innovation • Journey clashes – time for organic growth vs. predetermined funding timeline • Timing – can build or lose confidence and trust by the LCB in the process (integrity in the model) • Waiting periods create tension and anxiety, and the FP needs to answer to the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FPs on the ground with a local coordinator can maintain conversations, keep people informed and fuel momentum • Get things done when you are based in community • Get groundwork done before meetings so meetings run smoothly • Get groundwork done so applications get through quicker • Community knows everything the FP is doing • Answerable to the community regularly • Can monitor quality of services better and keep them accountable because they know what is going on in community • Can help identify needs because they know what is going on in community – or there are opportunities to discuss issues/problems as they arise, giving more thinking time
CONSISTENCY	SKILL OF FP COORDINATOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of consistency in approval process (change in centralised to decentralised contract management / change in contract managers who interpret things differently / change in overarching focus of the program to IAS) • Lack of consistency in the decision process (local level changes in FP / LCB) • Lack of consistency in the implementation process (changes in staff / changes in Menzies/Northern Institute/Bachelor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows government speak / wordsmith • Knows community speak / communicates well with community • Can tell a good story • Financial management skills / and knows the budget or is given control of the budget • Knows evidence-based programs • Knows evaluation • Heavy load vs. cruising



What works?

Pick something achievable from the gaps that can be filled easily to build trust and respect.	Service providers already have good relationships with the community.	Draw on something that is present in the community that will make the activity work.
Common goal / common vision where all parties focus on what is agreed to be the focus.	Workshop the government KPIs against the community vision to create a matrix of outcomes.	Relationships matter – FP and PMC Contract Manager have a good working relationship.
Freedom to evolve and push.	Ability to be creative and adapt to Indigenous settings.	Local knowledge is accepted as both evidence based and strengths based.

Creative writing/ability to tell a good story and can wordsmith to make an innovation strengths-based if no evidence base exists.

What does not work?

Re-training due to staff turnover – trying to align with service providers/PMC/FP coordinators	When PMC says no – tweaking the application results in loss of the community vision.	FP and PMC contract manager do not have a good working relationship.
PMC do not appreciate the circumstances and contexts of individual communities.	Only Western knowledge is accepted as evidence based – not local knowledge	No evidence exists or it is hard to dig up the evidence.

An activity-by-activity based funding approach (Tranche II) not an overall vision funding – easy to spot fill but not building overall momentum and collective impact of the program.

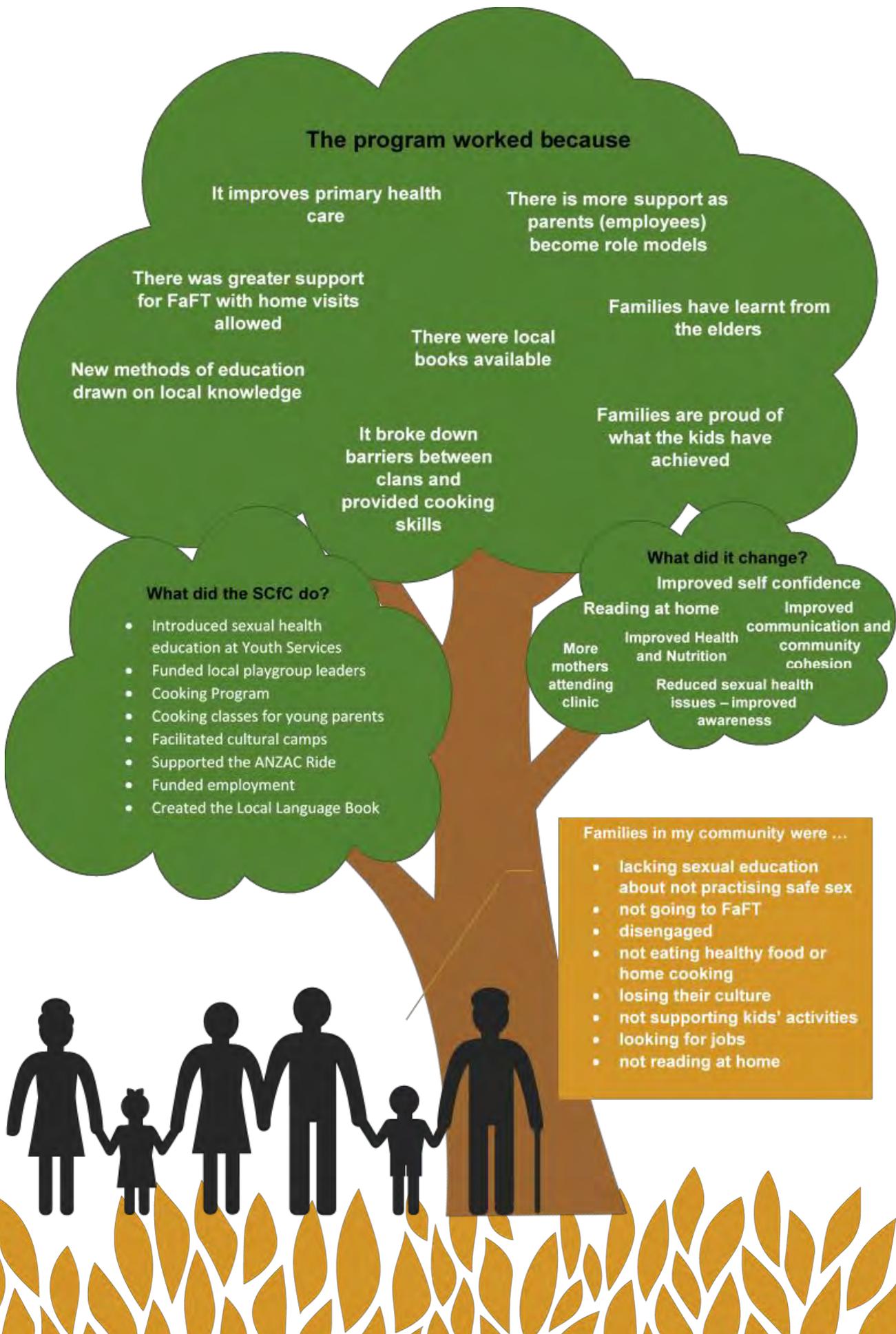
Challenges

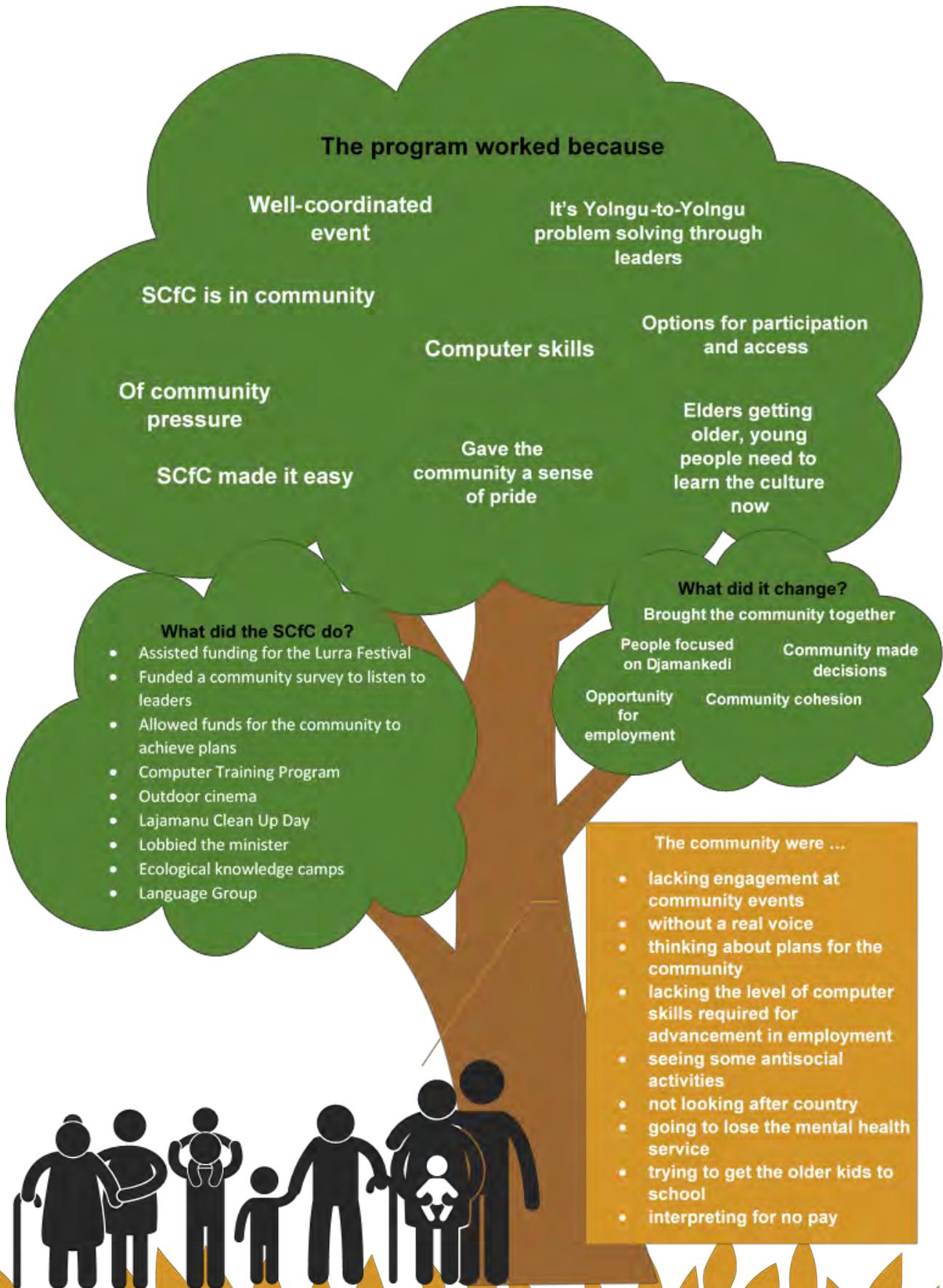
Forced volunteer aspect of SCfC

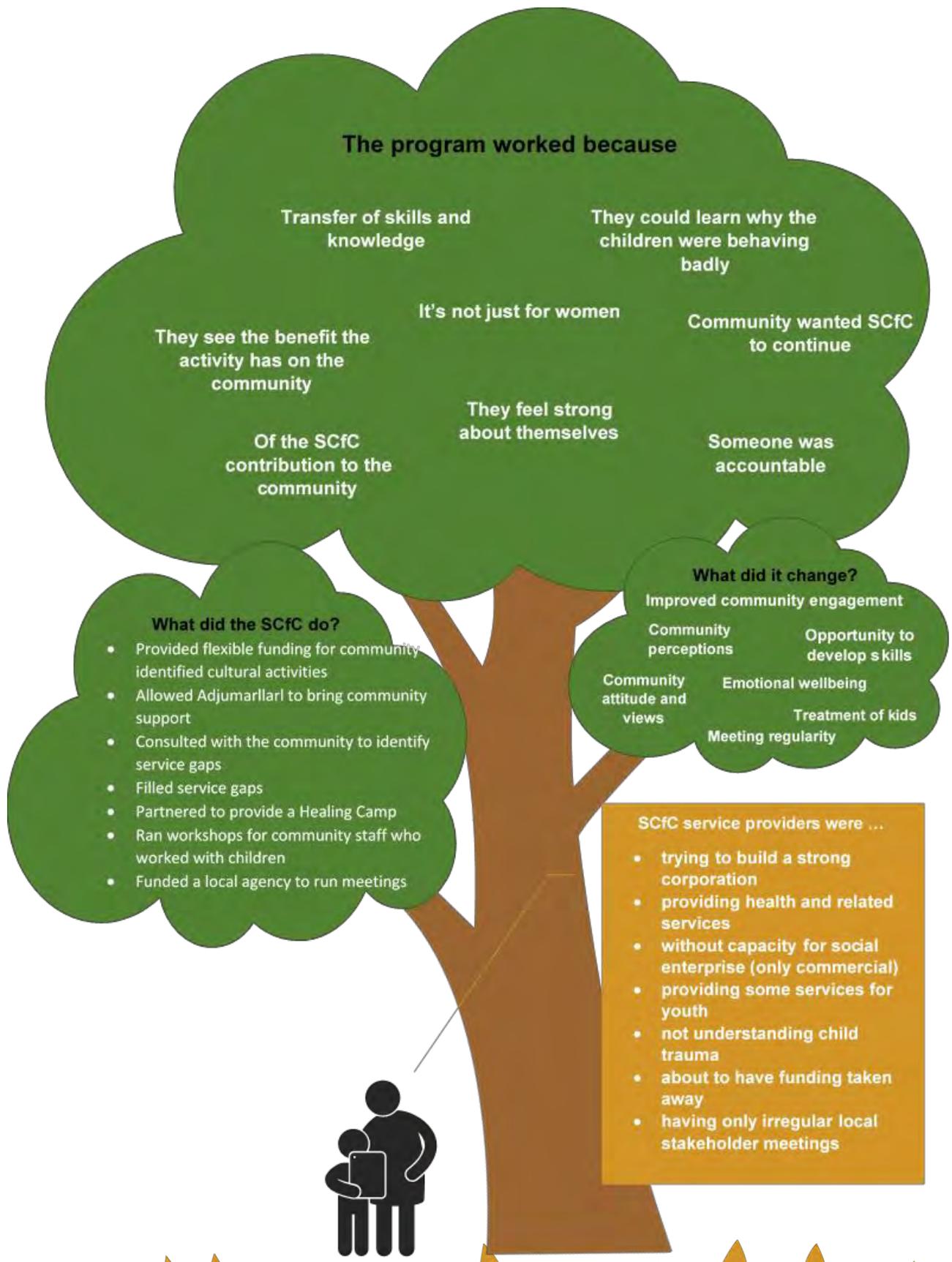
- LCB (consensus of whether sitting fees, Tranche I not Tranche II)
 - Put them out there
 - Value them as a strength
- Outstanding issues unresolved in a few places
- Work hours – negotiate with bosses (issues unresolved)
- Pay for work / not being disadvantaged by missing pay to get involved in SCfC
- Nice lunches shows respect for their contribution and time
- ‘Do service providers pay employees to participate in SCfC activities?’ – indicates support and value for the SCfC
- Constantly reengaging with staff turnover of non-Indigenous staff in community and no handover about SCfC to service providers
- Constantly need to be retaught; this is exhausting for FP and LCB
- Reliance on small groups for a lot of roles; wear many hats
- Create opportunities for young ones, then succession planning
- Nurturing respect for next generation
- ‘Jobs for young people’
- Evidence is redundant because we know it works – it’s now 2017 do we need evidence that self-determination works?
- T1 – planning time to do things right way / have time to think
- TII – use it or lose it quick show you are spending money

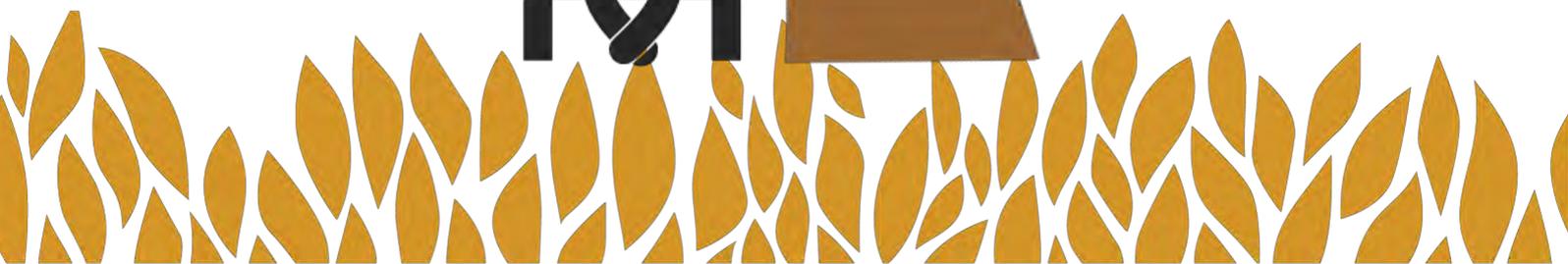
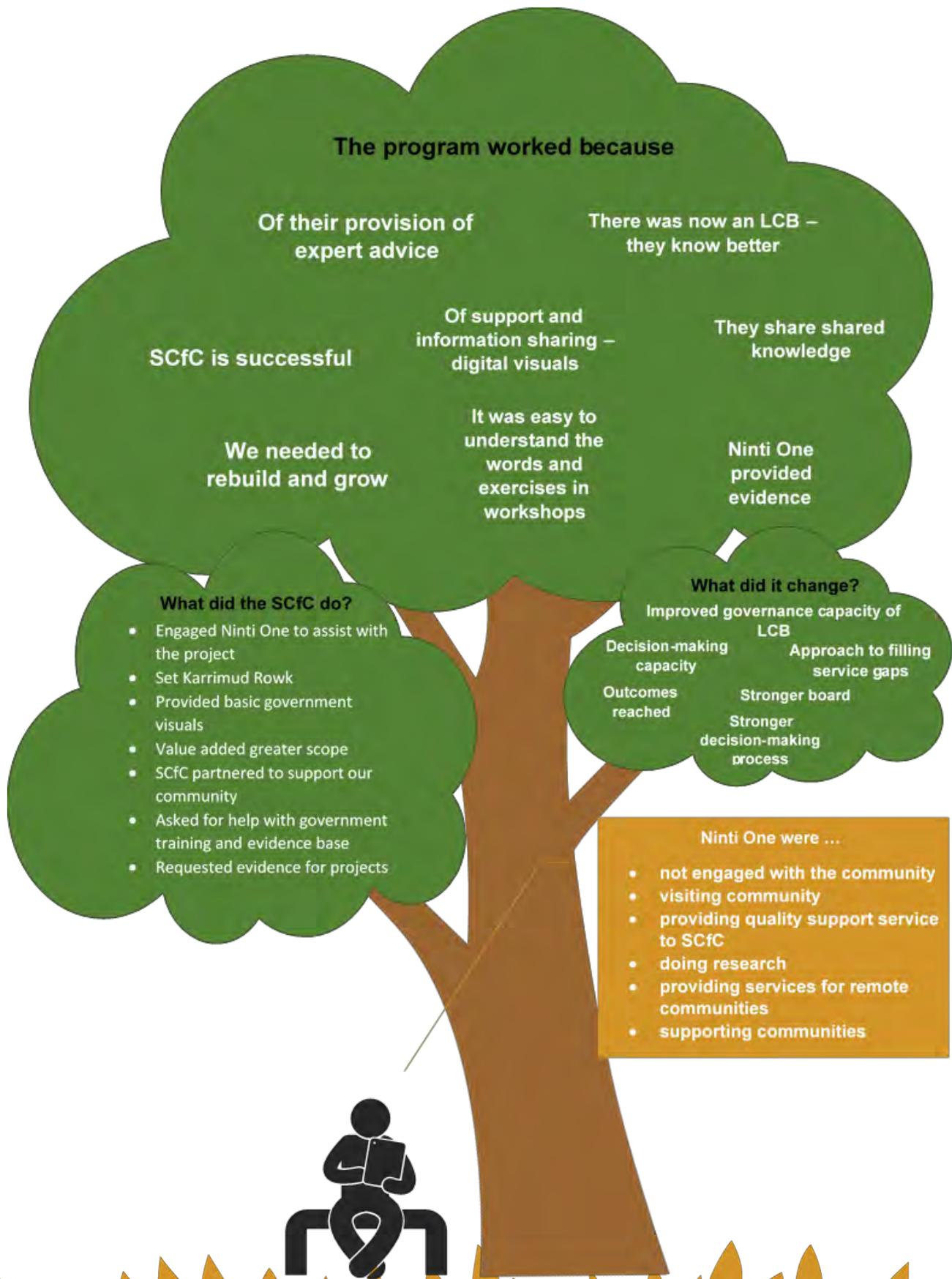
Finish this sentence:

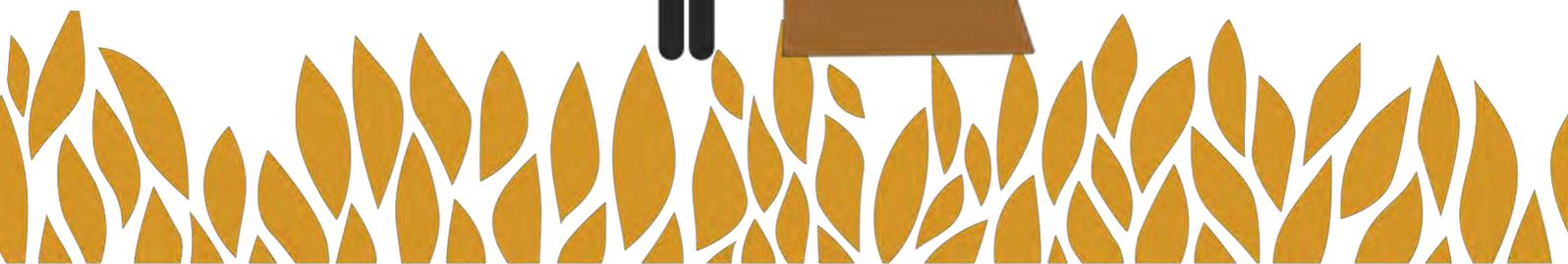
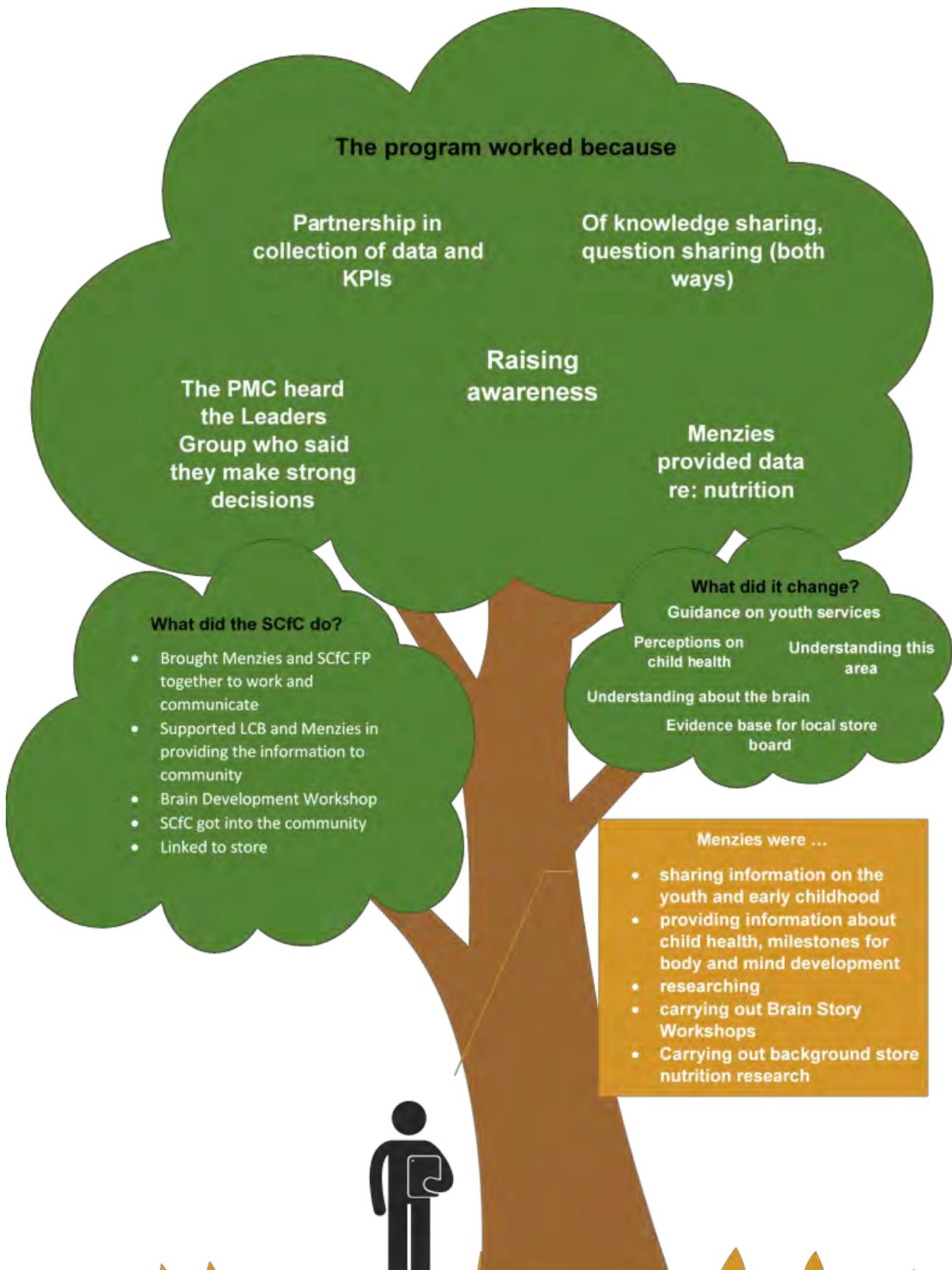


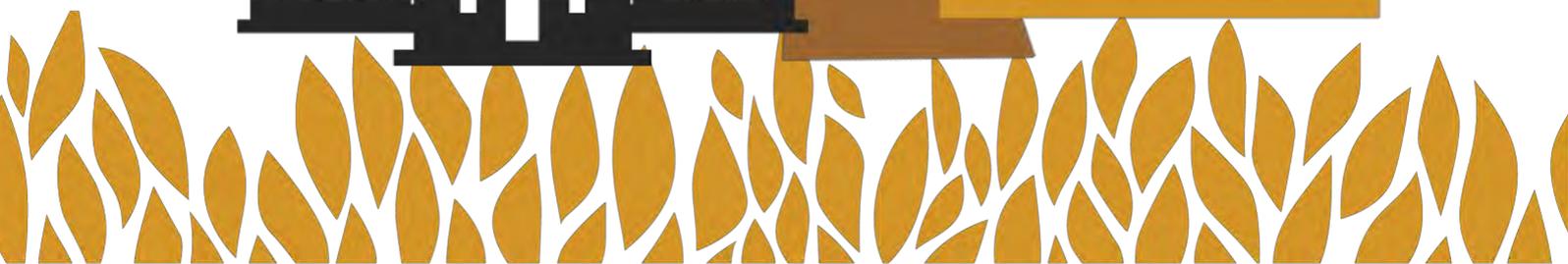
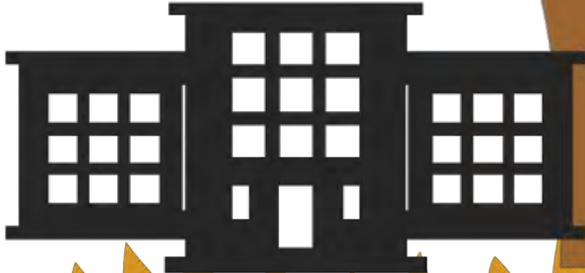
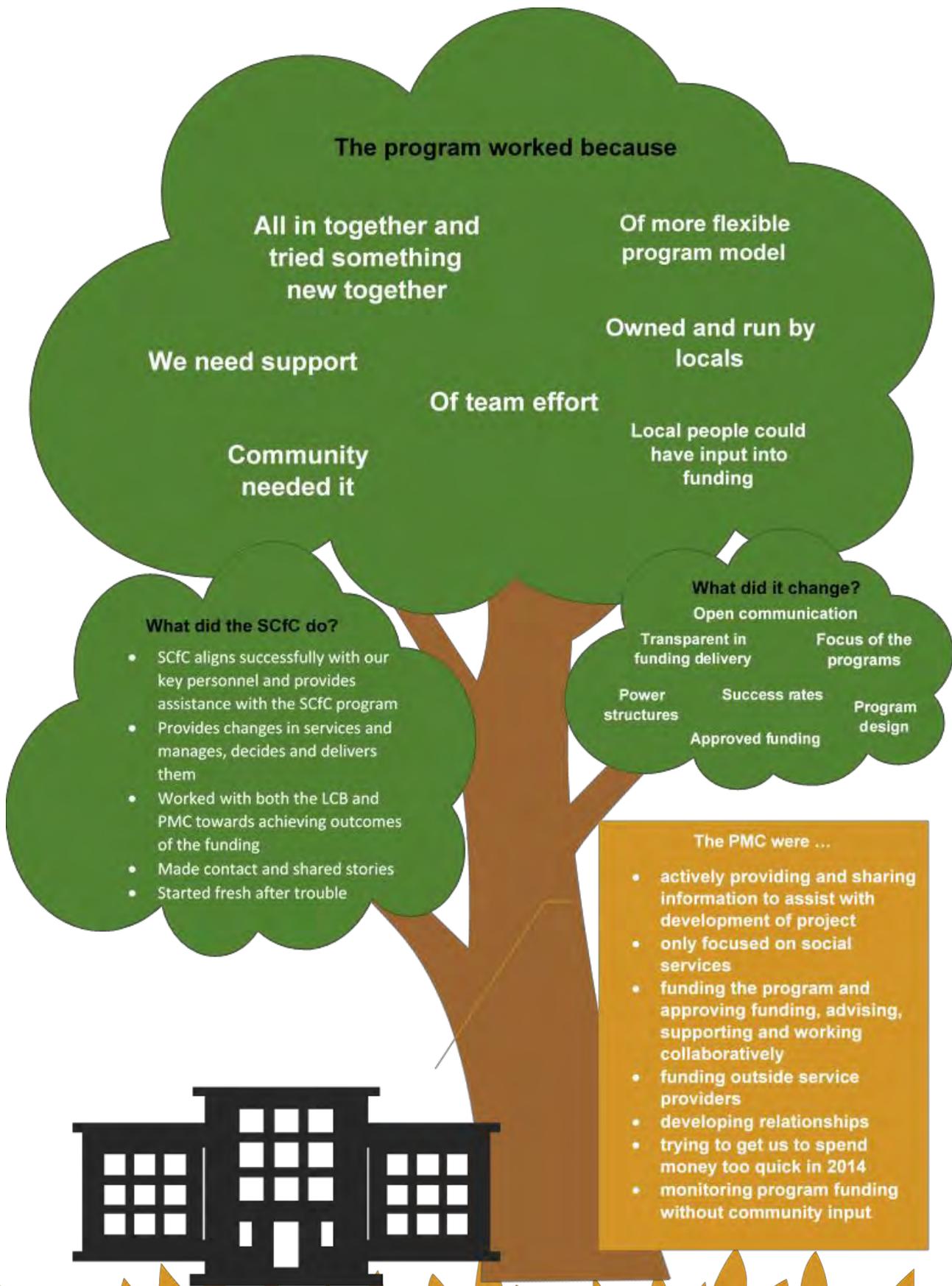












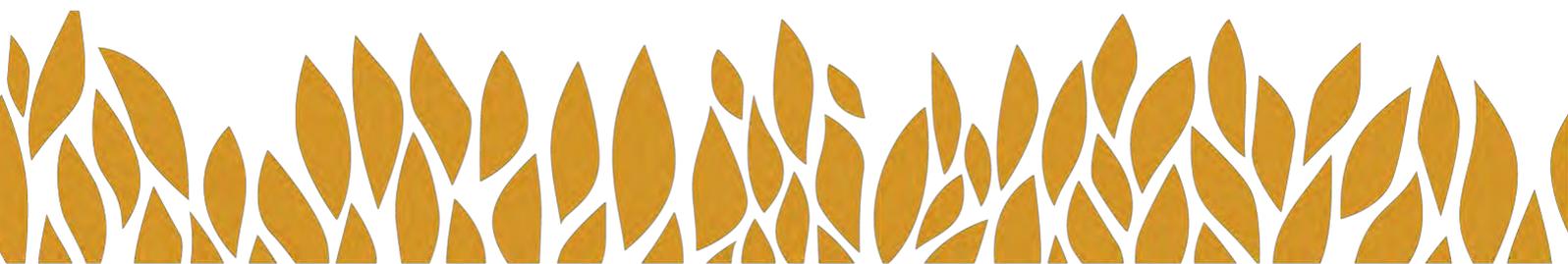
What we are proud of

Lurra Festival

<p>Who was involved? Official opening included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TIO • Local member • Chair of Board • All agencies • Community <p>The whole community participated in the event.</p> 	<p>What did the festival involve?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional BBQ • Dancing • Cultural activities • Sports • Fashion parade • Markets • Live music • Waterslide • DVD launch 	<p>How did the community feel?</p> <p>The whole community felt good about the event.</p> <p>The event benefited the community and local businesses.</p> 
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Our journey in Galiwin'ku

<p>January 2011 Yolngu Wanganmirr Mitj No Yolngu governance Funding created opportunity for Yolngu workforce of Child and Youth Services to come together.</p>	<p>December 2012 Funding ended Integrated Family Services YWM worked to be neutral – independent of the school FAHCSIA consulted SCfC – offered 10-year funding YWM invited Yala and Red Cross to facilitate</p>	<p>December 2017 Current funding ends</p>
<p>January 2012 With experience of governance it was realised that yaka \$s can't achieve dreams</p>	<p>January 2013 Start SCfC contract YWM, Yalu, Red Cross Rule book developed Community survey carried out to find community needs and YWM vision</p>	<p>June 2014 Tony Abbott elected Broke bipartisan agreement Had to reapply for IAS – three years given Rounds every six months Funding CP every six months Capacity development YWM, Yalu, Red Cross, Community</p>



Junior rangers

Number one priority

Strong culture

As identified by the LCB



LCB met with local Ranger Groups and explained what they want from the program

Ranger Groups wanted to plan the program for themselves

LCB continues to make decisions as per their own expectations



The local school was approached for involvement

School children now attend the program 4 days a week

Building safer communities through cooking

Purpose

Bring the community together

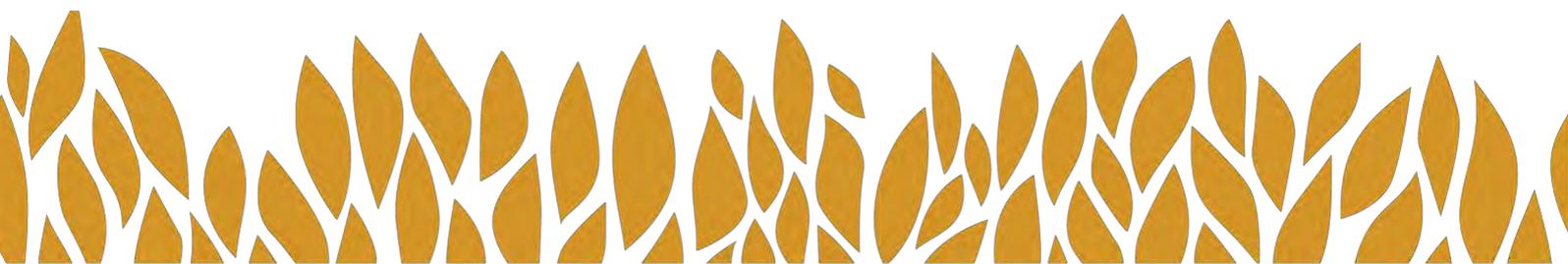
Decrease violence between clans, moieties

Outcomes

Merging young people to learn from and listen to Elders

Development of mentoring/leadership in community

Created a safe environment



Outdoor cinema

Purpose

Keep children busy at night and out of trouble

Who's responsible

Youth Centre

Activities include ...

BBQ, local photos and videos for first 30 mins



Challenges

Staff, power access, wet season

Solution

A purpose-built trailer

Positive Community Reaction

Activity Provides Youth Diversion & Safety

Mentoring position – Early Childhood

Educators at the crèche needed support from a mentor in communicating and interacting with children

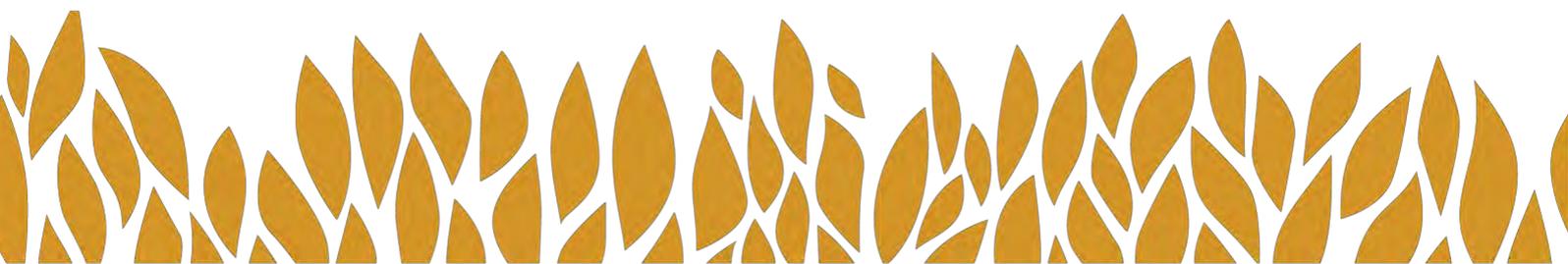
The Local Community Board supported the activity

The crèche supported the activity

Parents supported the activity

Outcomes

- Feedback has been positive
- Crèche educators have increased their engagement with children
- Children now engage more positively
- Local jobs for local people



Ride for pride



Community priority:

Kids should be educated about their cultural story

School requested \$14,000 in funding for the 2015 ANZAC ride

The event included a blessing with the community to farewell riders and a welcome home community event



SCfC trained students and teachers to produce the 2015 movie
School attendance increased
Kids learnt about teamwork



The event continued in 2016 and 2017

Included Rangers and more involvement from community

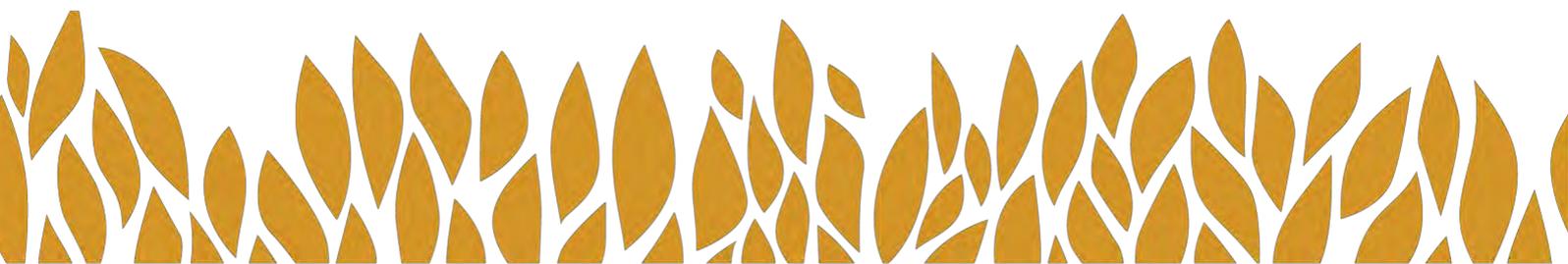
CLC Rangers Camp – Indigenous Ecological Knowledge Camp

Community priority:

To encourage children to go to school and learn about their cultural story

Ranger Program

- Created to encourage school attendance
- To give children the opportunity to develop cultural skills
- To keep children safe
- To keep children off the streets



Curriculum in Country – Bush trips

Priority

The school needs to teach things that are useful, important and relevant to local families



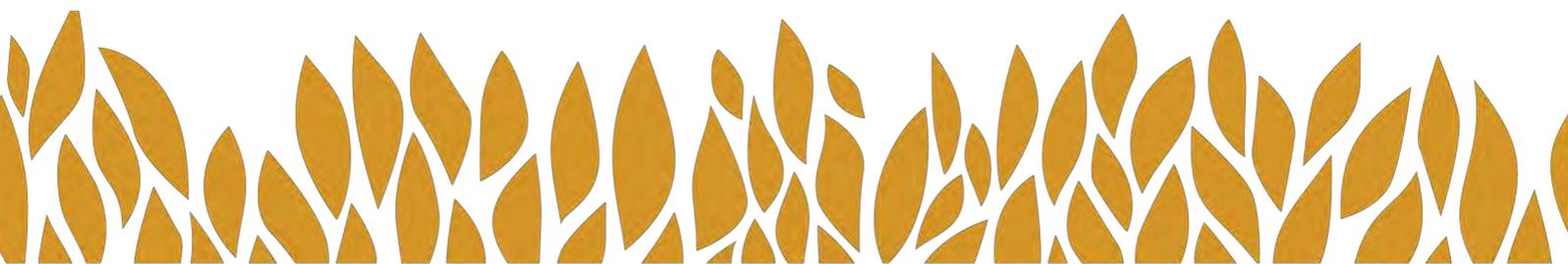
Who's responsible

The school agreed to run the bush trips if SCfC funded them



Activities include ...

Cultural advice of elders in country
Material and stories used in science class at school



Appendix D – Reflections and learnings

What FPs and LCBs would tell the next community

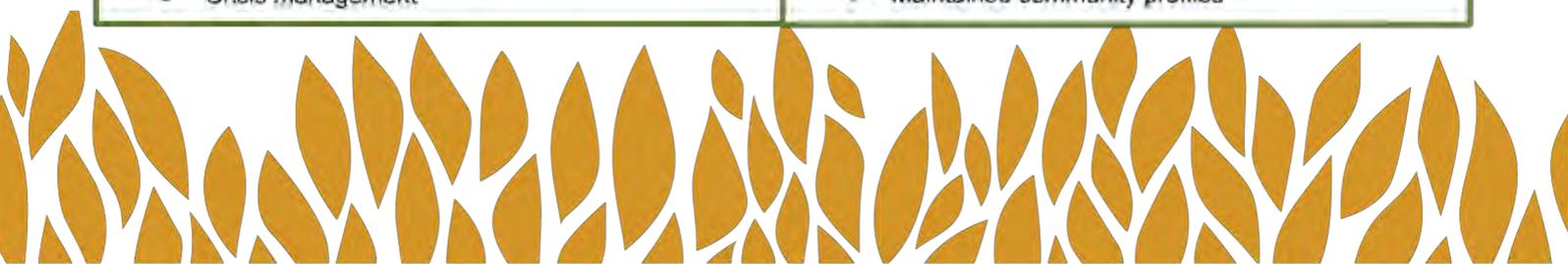
-
- Let the service providers know what you are doing
 - Invest in local organisations
 - Develop a baseline to measure against
 - Be prepared to compromise
 - Be open to new ideas
 - Aim for jobs for local people
 - Move slowly
 - Talk to the other service providers
 - Build relationships
 - Build a long-term strategic community plan
 - Work with young leaders in the community to share knowledge and ideas
 - FPs must be living within the community
 - Long-term funding is needed: 10 years
 - Talk is good, but you need action
 - Be knowledgeable about the community and how it all works together
 - Use an evaluation team to evaluate the program biannually
 - Do not hesitate to call for help – use the PMC and QSSP as resources
 - Can't have passion without ownership
- Start with a strong LCB
 - Feedback is important
 - Come together and share, invite the community to share, visit other places to build knowledge
 - You don't have to start a new committee
 - The FPs must work together with the LCB
 - Consult, consult again and communicate
 - Communication is key
 - Value local strengths and skills
 - It will give you access to all resources – if on a short-term funding stream
 - You need to have perseverance, flexibility, respect and a sense of humour
 - It's a good program for communities
 - Talk to, listen to and learn from the community
 - Be honest

Thoughts from an FP

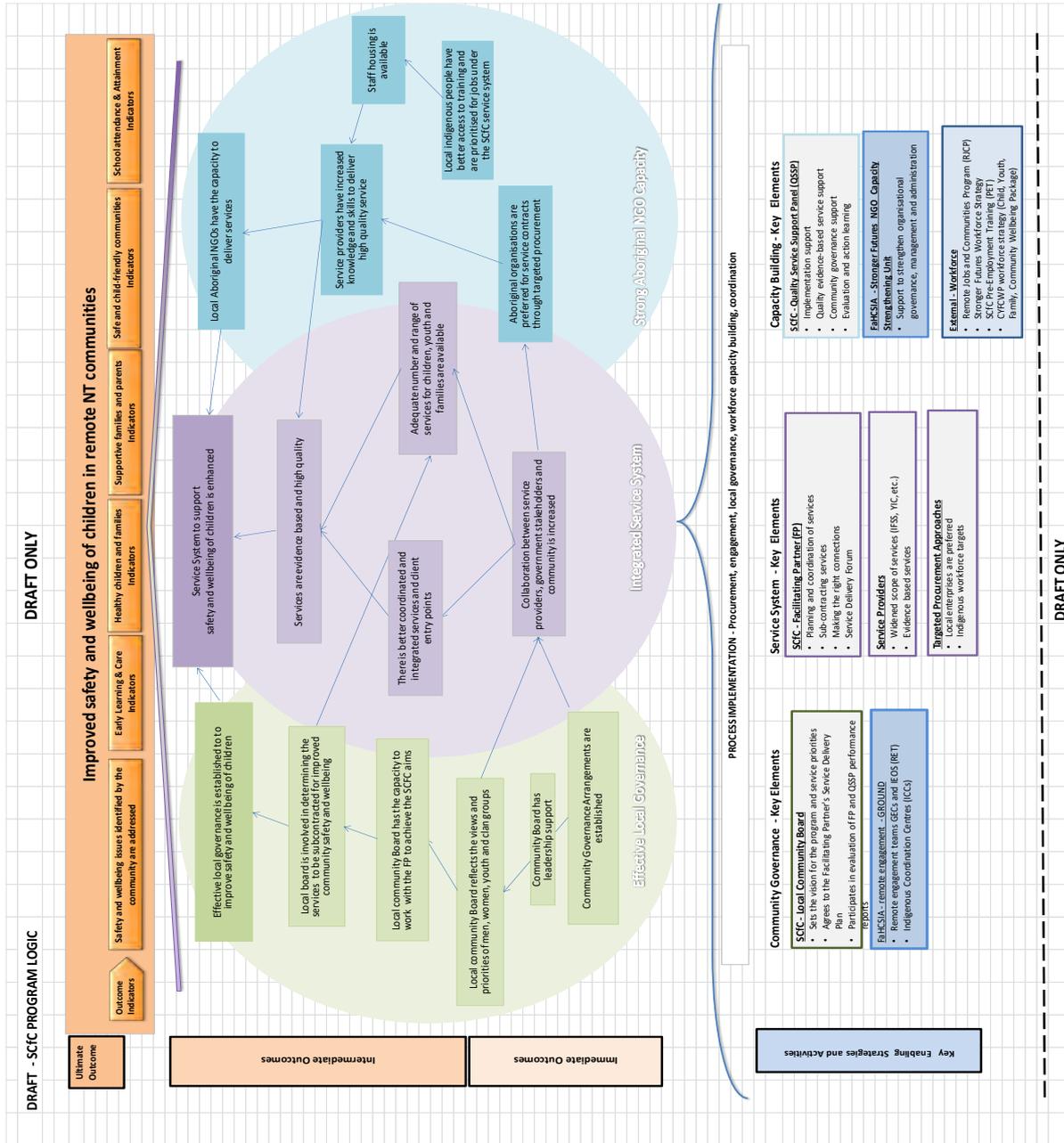


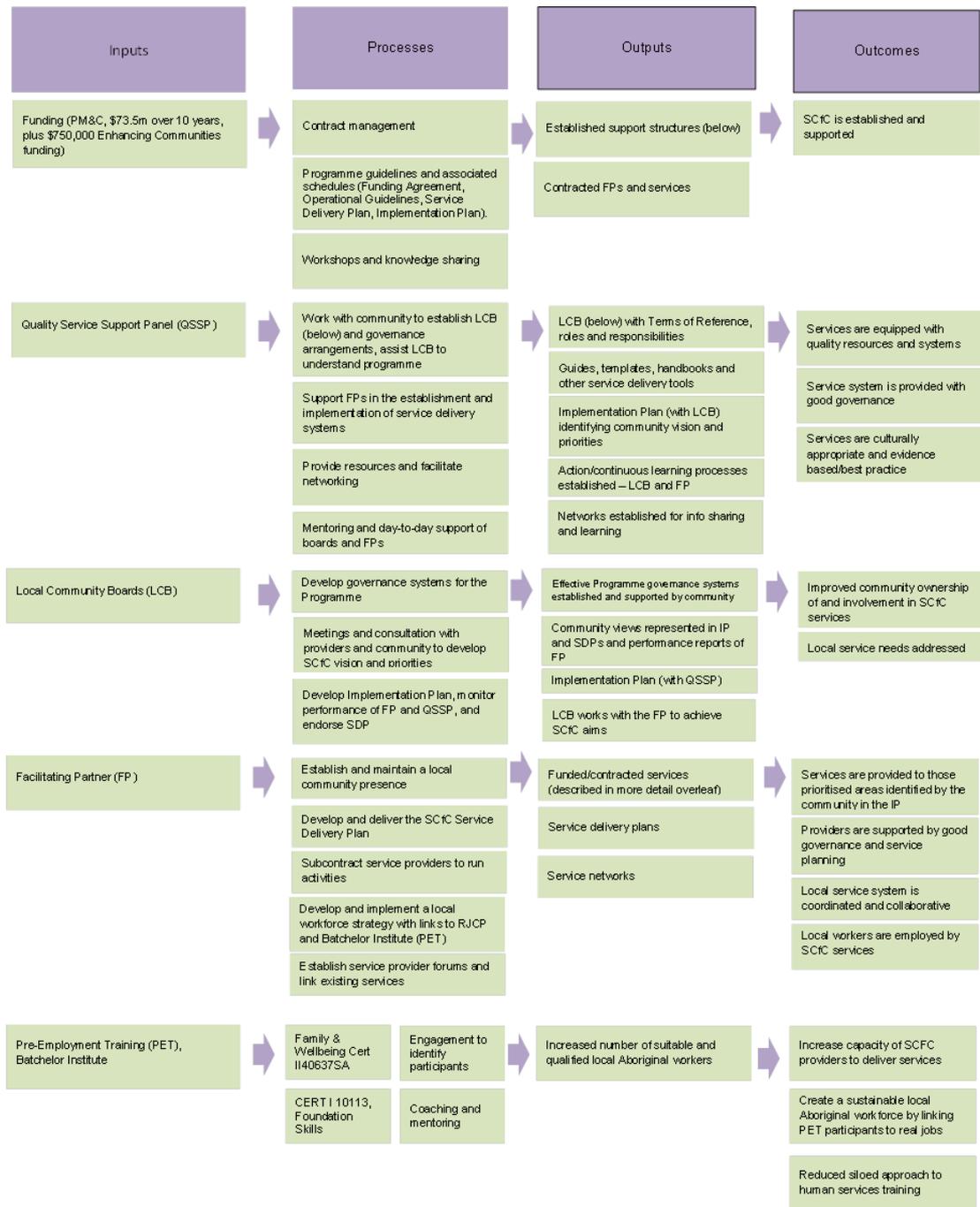
Appendix E – Role of the QSSP

The QSSP	
<p>A Quality Service Support Panel (QSSP), originally comprising Ninti One, Menzies School of Health Research and the Northern Institute. Under contract renewals in 2015, Ninti One and Menzies remained on the QSSP. The QSSP was tasked with working closely with communities to establish the LCBs and support the service delivery capacity of the FPs with technical expertise and training assistance.</p>	
<p>Responsible for: Capacity building, providing implementation support, providing quality evidence-based support, providing community governance support, providing evaluation and action learning.</p>	
<p>Role in the program</p> <p>Implementation Partner supporting all 10 sites</p>	<p>Role in evaluation</p> <p>Research Participant, Advisory Group</p>
QSSP responsibilities	
<p>Advisory Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the overall evaluation strategy • Provide advice assistance on scheduling evaluation in field • Communicate with the PMC regarding any issues or constraints to the implementation of the evaluation strategy. 	
<p>Facilitate research in communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback on the draft evaluation strategy • Schedule agreed evaluation activities in their respective locations • Help to facilitate evaluation activities as needed • Participate in focus group discussions and interviews as required • Provide documentation and data relevant to their operations to the evaluation team. 	
<p>Processes: Work with the community to establish LCB and governance arrangements, assist LCB to understand program, support FPs in the establishment and implementation of service delivery systems, provide resources and facilitate networking, mentoring and day-to-day support of boards and FPs</p>	
<p>Outputs: LCB with Terms of Reference, roles and responsibilities; guides, templates, handbooks and other service delivery tools, implementation plan (with LCB) identifying community vision and priorities, action/continuous learning processes established for the LCB and FP, networks established for info sharing and learning.</p>	<p>Outcomes: Services are equipped with quality resources and systems, service system is provided with good governance, services are culturally appropriate and evidence based/best practice</p>
What did the QSSP do?	
<p>In some but not all communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consulted with communities about SCfC • Facilitated the formation of the LCBs • Supported FPs with capacity-strengthening activities • Assisted with identifying evidence-based materials • Assisted with community research and evaluation • Crisis management 	<p>Collectively for sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated knowledge-sharing workshops • Communicated and increased awareness of the SCfC • Participated in the evaluation steering committee • Monitored progress through implementation • Maintained community profiles

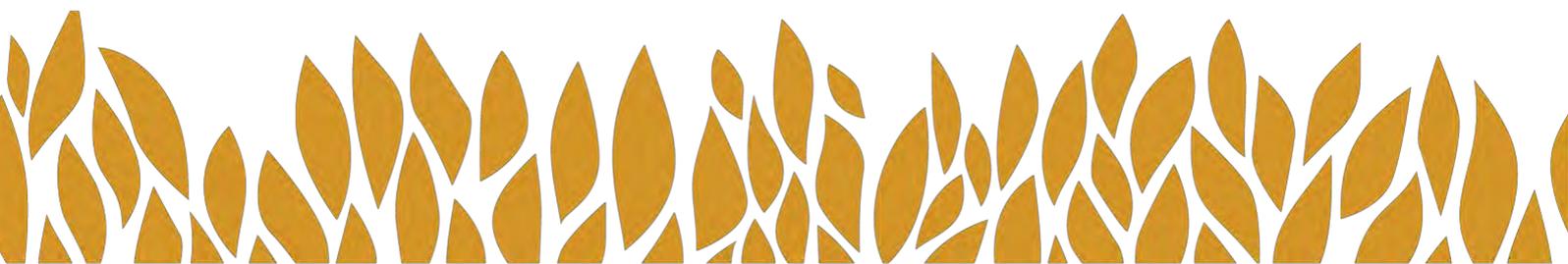


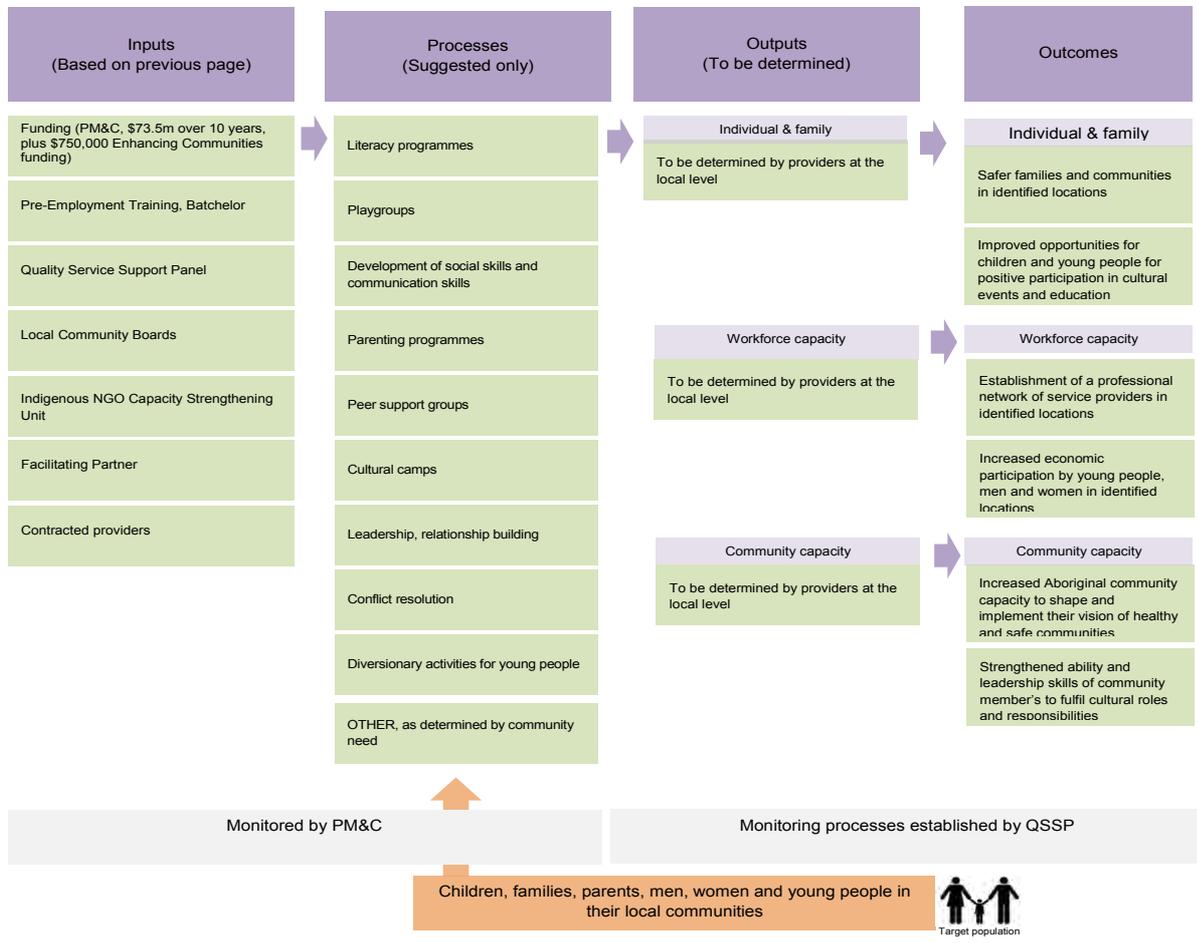
Appendix F – Initial program logic



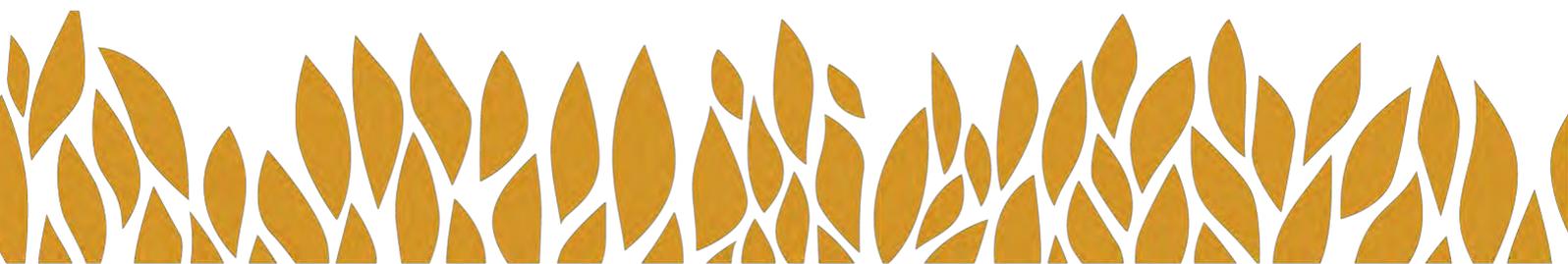


Source: Stronger Communities for Children Operational Guidelines, funding agreements and feedback from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C)





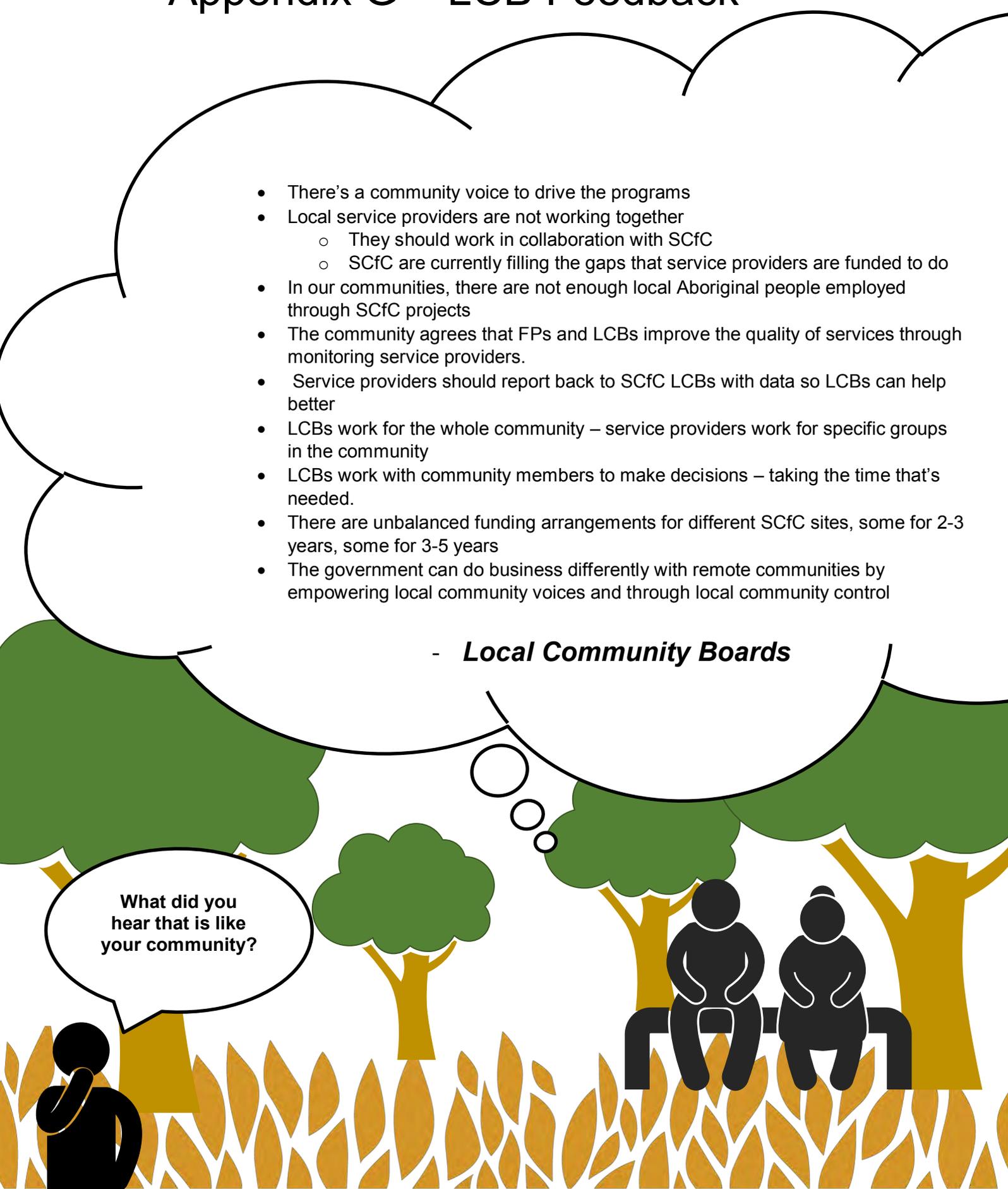
Source: SCfC Operational Guidelines (inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes). National Indigenous Reform Agreement, (population outcomes)



Appendix G – LCB Feedback

- There's a community voice to drive the programs
- Local service providers are not working together
 - They should work in collaboration with SCfC
 - SCfC are currently filling the gaps that service providers are funded to do
- In our communities, there are not enough local Aboriginal people employed through SCfC projects
- The community agrees that FPs and LCBs improve the quality of services through monitoring service providers.
- Service providers should report back to SCfC LCBs with data so LCBs can help better
- LCBs work for the whole community – service providers work for specific groups in the community
- LCBs work with community members to make decisions – taking the time that's needed.
- There are unbalanced funding arrangements for different SCfC sites, some for 2-3 years, some for 3-5 years
- The government can do business differently with remote communities by empowering local community voices and through local community control

- *Local Community Boards*



What did you hear that is like your community?

- Social capital – how to measure the framework and build partnerships with other communities
- Strong families should meet the needs of the community
- Strong experiences and knowledge
- Strong Yolngu Waganhamin Mitfi
- Allow more time to form the LCB the right way
- Develop and understand the program
- Provide more jobs for the community
- Build skills and share knowledge
- Help to plan community delivery service and real jobs
- Move forward by increasing funding
- Increase knowledge sharing
 - Have exchange programs to other communities to learn
 - The visit to Gunbalanya led to very strong engagement and strong empowerment
- We would like to see if evaluation has shown success – we've seen success so what are the next steps?
- LCBs must be strong
- LCBs should come together to share ideas every 3-4 months

- *Local Community Boards*

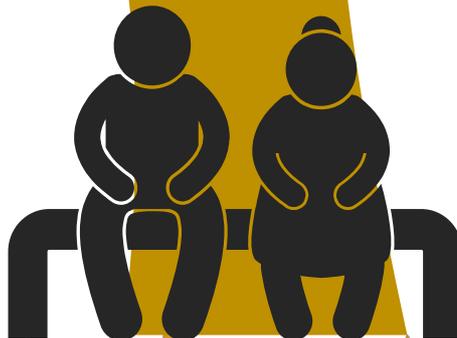
What can you do differently after hearing the evaluation story?



LCBs should ...

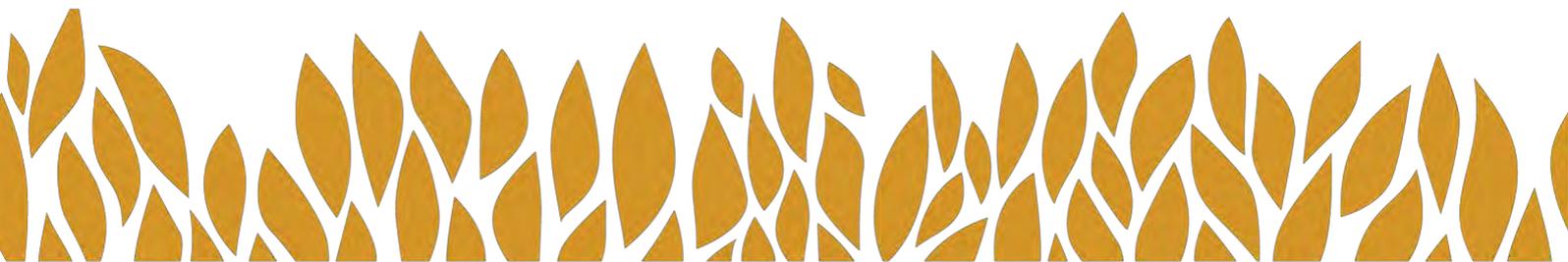
- Have strong voices
- Understand the community
- Listen and learn
- Share knowledge
- Be good communicators
- Show respect

What qualities do the LCB need to have?



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Additional resources

This is the place to give information on publications, websites and other useful sources of information for decision-makers can be found on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website.

<https://www.DPMC.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/grant/stronger-communities-children-scfc>

Further information and documentation about the program can be found on a number of websites.

<https://www.nintione.com.au/project/stronger-communities-children/>

<https://www2.aifs.gov.au/cfca/knowledgecircle/discussions/children-and-young-people/stronger-communities-children-communities>

<https://nacchocommunique.com/tag/stronger-communities-for-children/>

