Empowered Communities East Kimberley

Regional Development Agenda

October 2018

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1. Introduction

2. Regional Governance
   Partnership Table and Delivery Unit

3. Regional Development Agenda
   First Priorities
   Regional and Sub-regional Plans
   Monitoring and Evaluation
   Next Steps

4. Appendices
   Baseline Data
   Sub-regional Profiles

5. Acknowledgements
Introduction

We first came together in 2014 under the East Kimberley Aboriginal Charter. Aboriginal leaders working together across the region. We have made a commitment to long-term reform to secure the wellbeing of our People in this Country. Sometimes we have different views, but we all want a better future for our children.

We want no less than the opportunities and choices other Australians expect for their children. We want them succeeding in mainstream Australia, achieving educational success, prospering in the economy, and living long and healthy lives. We want them to retain their distinct cultures and identities, to be recognised as Aboriginal Australians, to shape and share in the future of this extraordinary place.

We have many strengths on which to build. Our old people have struggled but now we have country back. Our culture is strong and our languages survive. Our population is young and our youth are full of promise. Many of our people have fervent aspiration to take control of their lives, to build a future without reliance on Government.

Our goal is nothing short of securing the intergenerational social, cultural and economic development of our people. This will not be without its challenges, but the history of international development shows that by investing in our people, by building capability, we will succeed. Our success will be shared by all Australians living in and visiting this place. We ask that you work alongside us, in true partnership, to achieve this.

Now is the time to put children and families at the centre of effort and investment to Close the Gap. Our future depends on it. We’ve put up our hands to lead our own development, and to prove that we have the solutions to our problems. We ask that you work alongside us, in true partnership, to achieve this.
Our Goal is Development- we lead, Government enables

The fundamentals of human development are well understood. Development happens prior to birth and in the home, where children take sustenance, are loved and grown up strong in culture.

The natural leaders in our families, the formal leaders in our organisations and the cultural leaders in our communities all take responsibility for our development. For making good decisions in our domains, for keeping culture strong and for reinforcing and restoring the social norms needed to underpin human development.

Government cannot replace the role that families play in human development, should not crowd out the role that industry and enterprise plays in driving economic development. But we do need excellent health and education systems creating opportunity building capability; policy and regulation to support functioning markets; and innovative commissioning and procurement approaches that grow the Aboriginal business and service sector in this region. Decisions about investing in these foundations for development must be made in partnership with us. This is why self-determination is not simply a matter of us taking responsibility, it is also about structural reform. We call on Government to meet us where we are and to work in partnership to secure the foundations for our development. This is what it means for Government to play an enabling role.
Regional Governance

Since opting in to Empowered Communities in 2015, we have worked hard to develop our formal regional governance arrangements.

In 2016, we established our backbone organisation Binarri-binyja yarrawoo (BBY) as a neutral facilitator of reform. We have built a membership base among Aboriginal organisations of the East Kimberley and mechanisms for community engagement. We have brought together Traditional Owner Corporations (PBCs) and Aboriginal-controlled service organisations.

Too often it is left to us to navigate the maze of bureaucracy and mediate Federal-State relations on the ground. We have done the heavy lifting. Our reform leadership and governance is in place. Now it is Government’s turn.

We are ready to co-design a Regional Partnership Table. A place where we make agreements with Government, NGOs and corporates about long term reform in the region and the investment needed to support it. We have learned from experience that reform efforts to end Aboriginal disparity often founder at implementation. To prevent this, we will need a group of high-level Inter-governmental Reform Champions, to meet us at the Regional Partnership Table and a Partnership Delivery Unit to drive implementation.
Regional Development Agenda

While it is difficult to get an accurate snapshot of State and Federal Government funding flows in the East Kimberley, our investment mapping suggests that the lion’s share of Government contracting in the region is directed towards infrastructure and health care (see sub-regional profiles in the appendices). While funding for infrastructure and tertiary healthcare is important, we will not advance Aboriginal Development or Regional Development in the East Kimberley until we invest in people. We must redirect funding away from crisis responses and toward building human capability. For us, that means first and foremost:

• Building strong community belonging to help positive intergenerational and personal wellbeing, and connection to country and culture;

• Keeping language, culture, lore and connection to country strong to help people feel pride in themselves, take ownership and help everyone feel good;

• Families are together and united at home and feel empowered to be strong in their culture, have good family values and celebrate the good things together;

• Constant learning throughout life, including cultural education at home and parents valuing education from their child’s birth;

• Economic empowerment, supported through employment financial capability and business development.

These are the 5 domains of our Regional Development Agenda. They are supported and reinforced by structural reforms to produce:

• Reform leadership and governance
• Recognition and reconciliation
• An enabling service system
• Infrastructure and industry development

Although we have started work on the Regional Development Agenda and Regional and Sub-regional Implementation Plans, we are far from finished. These are living documents. They will be reviewed, adapted and extended as:

• new sub-regions opt-in to Empowered Communities East Kimberley
• Local Management Committees host community forums and new priorities are voiced
• partnerships with Governments, NGOs and corporates deepen and new opportunities and design innovation emerges
We have identified first priorities in the Regional Development Agenda and have started working with partners to co-design and deliver aligned initiatives.
## Regional Development Agenda: East Kimberley Regional Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Domains</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Partners and Agencies involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Families at Home; Economic Empowerment</strong></td>
<td>First Priority Employment Initiative- 100+ Jobs</td>
<td>Pilot an Aboriginal-led employment program in Kununurra, Wyndham and Halls Creek.</td>
<td>Reducing the number of jobless households in the region is critical for social and economic empowerment. 100+ Jobs Initiative targets people left behind by CDP and Centrelink reforms.</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
<td>MG Corp; BBY; PM&amp;C; WA Department of Communities; EKJP; KGT; Jawun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Families at Home; Learning for Life; Economic Empowerment</strong></td>
<td>North West Aboriginal Housing Fund co-design partnership</td>
<td>Co-design expansion of East Kimberley transitional housing program. Develop Empowered Communities East Kimberley fund proposal.</td>
<td>Transitional housing originated in the East Kimberley and has been successful in empowering individuals and families achieve greater economic independence and increased participation in education. There is an opportunity now to innovate beyond the current model to leverage increased outcomes.</td>
<td>December 2019</td>
<td>Empowered Communities East Kimberley opt-ins; WA Department of Communities; BBY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>People &amp; Country (wellbeing)</strong></td>
<td>Regional Alcohol Reform</td>
<td>Establish partnership on Regional Alcohol Reform to convene the next Alcohol Management Roundtable and produce a Regional Alcohol Action Plan.</td>
<td>Alcohol abuse is a threat to Aboriginal culture across the Kimberley. Policy responses have been piecemeal and disempowering. Strong regional alignment is needed to combat sly gorging.</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td>BBY; Aarnja; NBY; Government partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language &amp; Culture</strong></td>
<td>Working Together Session</td>
<td>Iterate M&amp;E Framework. Baseline remaining population level indicators. Plug data gaps with partners. Nest with Closing the Gap (CTG). Test Designing for Impact tools. Fund Community Researchers proposal. Align Government and NGO performance frameworks to EC led shared measurement agreements.</td>
<td>To guide local decision-making about investment from the Regional Pooled Fund, we need a clearer line of sight to the contribution each funded program is making to achieve population-level outcomes and systems change in our Regional Development Agenda.</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td>BBY; Empowered Communities opt-ins; PM&amp;C; ABS; WA Govt; CFI; EC Data Director</td>
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## Regional Development Agenda: East Kimberley Regional Plan

### East Kimberley – Regional Plan

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<tr>
<td>Reform Leadership and Governance</td>
<td>Local Decision Making (Structural reform)</td>
<td>Evaluate Joint Decision Making (JDM) test conducted in two sub-regions in the East Kimberley. Adapt JDM Guide. Extend beyond Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) funding to DSS investment. Trial with WA Govt. Extend beyond contracting to service delivery.</td>
<td>Local decision-making mobilises Community Panels to enable greater Aboriginal influence over Government-funded programs in the region, ensuring investment is meeting the needs of people on the ground.</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>PM&amp;C; DSS; EC National; BBY; WA Govt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform Leadership and Governance</td>
<td>Regional Pooled Fund (Structural reform)</td>
<td>PM&amp;C and EC National to identify Commonwealth grants to form pool and financial governance arrangements. PM&amp;C to hold productivity dividend from JDM in Regional Pooled Fund for redirection (by sub-region) when ready. Commence discussions with WA Govt about Regional Pooled Fund.</td>
<td>Streamlining Commonwealth and State Government investment in the region will reduce overlap, duplication and waste.</td>
<td>July 2019</td>
<td>PM&amp;C; EC National; Cth Dept Fin; WA Govt; BBY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform Leadership and Governance</td>
<td>Regional Partnership Table and Delivery Unit (Structural reform)</td>
<td>Appoint senior inter-governmental reform champions. Co-design Regional Partnership Table and Delivery Unit.</td>
<td>Regional governance arrangements are needed to drive a long term, place-based agenda for Aboriginal empowerment in the East Kimberley.</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td>LMCs; BBY; PM&amp;C; WA Govt; Shires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform Leadership and Governance</td>
<td>Sub-regional action plans</td>
<td>Complete sub-regional action plans for Kununurra and Halls Creek. Expand membership base in Warmun, Wyndham, Kalumburu and Tjurabalan and establish LMCs.</td>
<td>Place-based action plans developed by the Local Management Committees with input from Community Forums will prioritise initiatives across the Regional Development Agenda domains.</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>Empowered Communities opt-ins; BBY</td>
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## Regional Development Agenda: Sub-regional Plans

### Sub-regional Plan- Kununurra

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<th>Role of Individuals and Families</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language and Culture; Families at Home; Learning For Life</td>
<td>Implement Kununurra Education Strategy</td>
<td>Align IAS Children and Schooling investment with Kununurra Education Strategy. Catalyse aligned initiatives, especially in early years and primary to high-school transition.</td>
<td>See Kununurra Education strategy at <a href="http://bby.org.au">bby.org.au</a></td>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>LMC; PM&amp;C; DLG; Schools; Early Years Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform Leadership and Governance</td>
<td>Develop Kununurra sub-region action plan</td>
<td>Complete investment and service mapping to guide Kununurra sub-region action plan. Surge capability to support sub-regional planning.</td>
<td>Place-based action plans developed by the Local Management Committees with input from Community Forums</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>LMC and Community Forums; BBY; Jawun</td>
<td></td>
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### Sub-regional Plan- Halls Creek

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Domains</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning For Life</td>
<td>Develop Halls Creek Education Strategy or priority actions</td>
<td>Evidence brief and engagement with HCDHS and TAFE to guide prioritisation of mutually reinforcing actions.</td>
<td>Improve educational attendance and attainment in Halls Creek.</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td>LMC; HCDHS; TAFE; BBY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform Leadership and Governance</td>
<td>Develop Hall Creek sub-region action plan</td>
<td>Complete investment and service mapping to guide Halls Creek sub-region action plan. Surge capability to support sub-regional planning.</td>
<td>Place-based action plans developed by the Local Management Committees with input from Community Forums</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>LMC and Community Forums; BBY; Jawun</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Evaluating long-term social change efforts in complex environments is not straightforward.

We have started developing a M&E Framework and suite of Designing for Impact tools that will:

• Build knowledge about ‘what works, for whom, in what circumstances’ in our region
• Help us track the contribution programs are making (or not making) to population level outcomes and systems change called for in the RDA
• Provide real-time information to support decision-making about program adaptation and redesign
• Provide an evidence base to support decision-making about allocations from the Regional Pooled Fund

We have set some headline indicators and taken a baseline. However, there are many things we are interested in tracking (e.g. parenting self-efficacy) for which East Kimberley data is not available. We will need support from partners to access their data sources and to develop our community based researcher capability.

Over time, we need to build the data and evaluation capability of our Aboriginal organisational members, Government and NGO partners in the region, to move us all to a shared measurement framework and to promote evidence-based decision-making.
Regional Development Agenda: Next Steps

- Further develop M&E Framework by December 2018

- Evaluation and data partnership group (with Federal, State and Local Government data owners) assembled by December 2018

- By June 2019, Federal, State and Local Government commitment to developing Regional Partnership Table, Delivery Unit and Regional Pooled Fund

- Surge capability to complete subregional implementation plans by June 2019

- Ready to commence negotiation of investment plans at Regional Partnership Table in July 2019
Appendix i. Baseline Data

This baseline data has been compiled as a snapshot for Aboriginal development in four Domains- People and Country (wellbeing), Families at Home, Learning for Life and Economic Empowerment. More work is needed to finalising these indicators. BBY is currently developing a comparison framework to assist with benchmarking and the establishment of a data dashboard. East Kimberley data has been used, except where unavailable (in which case State data has been used as indicated in table).

Performance indicators used for measuring Aboriginal Development in the East Kimberley under the Empowered Communities Regional Development Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Domain</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>East Kimberley Data</th>
<th>Maps to Closing the Gap (CTG) Targets</th>
<th>Available for EC sub-regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People &amp; Country</td>
<td>Proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 15 and over reported that they lived on their homelands or traditional country</td>
<td>29% (WA-State)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life Expectancy at birth, by gender for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</td>
<td>66- Males 72- Females</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders aged 15 and over who exceed the lifetime risk alcohol guidelines</td>
<td>17% (WA-State)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families at Home</td>
<td>Percentage of dwellings that are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households and require an extra bedroom</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parenting Self-efficacy</td>
<td>In development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander couple families where both parents are not in the labour force</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children reunified with birth family</td>
<td>In development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For data sources please contact BBY
## Performance indicators used for measuring Aboriginal Development in the East Kimberley under the Empowered Communities Regional Development Agenda

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<th>Maps to Closing the Gap (CTG) Targets</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning for Life</td>
<td>Number and proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable in one or more AEDC domain</td>
<td>One in two (44.7%)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20-24 who have completed year 12 or equivalent</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attending school 90 percent or more of the time</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders aged 15-24 engaged in Employment, Education and Training</td>
<td>326</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Empowerment</td>
<td>Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders households that are owner occupied (including those with a mortgage)</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders participating in the labour force</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal Business Growth - <em>Indicator in development (seeking advise from Australian Bureau of Statistics for taxation data)</em></td>
<td>In development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander weekly household income</td>
<td>$880</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For data sources please contact BBY*
Appendix ii. Sub-regional Profile: Kununurra

Priorities identified in recent consultations
(Govt. and non-Govt. consultations)

- **Jobs and Training** are high priorities for Aboriginal people in Kununurra. It is important to have meaningful employment opportunities and a diverse industry base to support Aboriginal businesses.

- **Housing** is of high concern, particularly for older people and children in overcrowded homes. Aboriginal voices in planning of housing is essential.

- **Education** starting at the early years is an important focus. Language and culture is required to support strong relationships between families and schools, coupled with the provision of intensive family support services.

- **Health** (particularly the unknown prevalence of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) has been highlighted as critical. Adequate resources to support assessments and diagnosis are needed. Also, more mental health services and culturally supportive programs are required to support young people.

- **Access to land and cultural strength** is vital, not only for wellbeing but also opportunities for culture based tourism and bush medicines.

- Providing youth and their families opportunity to thrive is a high concern—particularly responses to youth who require complex support.

For data sources please contact BBY

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Government Investment in the sub-region of Kununurra

- **Empowered Communities Current Work**
  - 100+ Jobs Initiative
  - North West Aboriginal Housing Fund
  - Kununurra Education Strategy

- **Action Areas**

- **Government Investment in the sub-region of Kununurra**
  - Over the past few years around 74 Commonwealth and State Government contracts have been issued specifically for Kununurra worth approximately $75 million. Most of the funding was for health and wellbeing followed by support for education. The Kununurra specific contracts were awarded to 32 different organisations and agencies.
Appendix ii. Sub-regional Profile: Halls Creek

For data sources please contact BBY

Priorities identified in recent consultations
(Govt. and non-Govt. consultations)

- **Education** is an urgent priority identified in Halls Creek. There are calls for strong pathways to ongoing training and jobs after school that are meaningful for young people and engages them early, to avoid trouble with police or welfare.

- **Jobs and Training** are high priorities for Aboriginal people in Halls Creek. Job creation in communities and opportunities for small business and enterprise is called for.

- **Housing** is of high concern - infrastructure development in Halls Creek with appropriate maintenance agreements are essential for individuals and families to thrive. As well as housing, co-designed and structurally sound infrastructure on community blocks is needed to support good community functioning.

- **Leadership** is important to the people of Halls Creek. It is important to promote the strengths that Aboriginal people bring to the region and continue to build capability of Aboriginal people, to empower collaboration efforts to support Aboriginal led change.

- **Economic development** opportunities through land tenure and diverse industries that can support Aboriginal businesses.

Government Investment in the sub-region of Halls Creek

- Over the past few years around 70 Commonwealth and State Government contracts have been issued specifically for Halls Creek worth approximately $101 million. This chart includes investment into Warmun which contributes to the high infrastructure allocation. The next major investment area is health and wellbeing, followed by support for education. The Halls Creek specific contracts were awarded to 28 different organisations. There are also more than one hundred contracts spread across the Kimberley with around $48.9 million for Halls Creek.
Appendix ii. Sub-regional Profile: Tjurabalan

Priorities identified in recent consultations (Govt. and non-Govt. consultations)

- **Efficient infrastructure** and making use of current building structures is important. This will support opportunities for new job creation and refurbishing current community buildings to be better fit for purpose.
- **Housing** maintenance has been raised in consultations as an issue. There is opportunity to advocate for procurement of housing maintenance to be awarded to local Aboriginal organisations, upskilling local people for maintenance roles while linking into employment opportunities.
- **Jobs and training** is important to sustain individual and family opportunity. There are calls to develop more ‘on-country’ jobs such as ranger groups.
- Increasing opportunities for economic development is important. By increasing opportunity for **Aboriginal businesses** (diversified businesses, including art and tourism), families and communities can better plan for long term economic development.
- **Education** is a priority - provision of **early childhood programs** and education are critical. Cross-cultural and bilingual approaches in education are essential to engaging kids to boost school attendance.

For data sources please contact BBY

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Empowered Communities Current Work

**Action Areas**

- Develop Tjurabalan LMC
- Build BBY Membership to shape future priorities and opportunities

**Government Investment in the sub-region of Tjurabalan**

20 contracts worth $16.1 million

- 60% Caring for children and the vulnerable
- 19% Education
- 10% Employment/Training
- 4% Health and Wellbeing
- 6% Infrastructure
- 1% Safe communities

Over the past few years around 20 Commonwealth and State Government contracts have been issued specifically for the Tjurabalan region worth approximately $16 million. Most of the funding was for health and wellbeing followed by support for education. The Tjurabalan specific contracts were awarded to 13 different organisations.
Acknowledgements

Binarri-binyja yarrawoo Aboriginal Corporation would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the East Kimberley; the people of the Balanggarra, Miriwoong Gajerrong, Yurriyangem Taam, Gooring, Malarngowem, Koonjie Elvire, Purnulu, Ngarrawanji, Uunguu, Wilinggin, Gajirrabeng, Gooniyandi Kija, Walmajarri Kwini, Jaru and Tjurabalan groups.

We would like to acknowledge our supporters and partners for their support to BBY in implementing the Empowered Communities reform agenda in the East Kimberley. These partners are Prime Minister and Cabinet, Department of Communities (Government of Western Australia), Collaboration for Impact and Jawun.

The cover page artwork and artwork used within our graphics is by Gloria Mengil.

We would also like to thank our members- the dedicated people who make up these organisations give Empowered Communities in the East Kimberley voice and direction.
Binarri-binyja Yarrawoo - backbone for Empowered Communities in the East Kimberley

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