



**NORTHERN
LAND COUNCIL**

Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life



Community Planning and Development Program

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025
Executive Summary

SVA Consulting

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Acknowledgements:

This report was prepared by Brendan Ferguson, SVA Director Consulting and Alison Kwok, SVA Consultant.

Its content is based on available information about the Northern Land Council and its Community Planning and Development Program and the views of some individuals.

The Northern Land Council acknowledges the contributions of SVA in facilitating the process and providing professional expertise. It also acknowledges contributions of internal staff and Council members, in particular staff of the Community Planning and Development Branch and Joy Cardona, for sharing their expertise and experience, and for the shared views of external stakeholders.

The construct of the Strategic Plan reflects the views of its contributors and the methodology used by SVA. The Strategic Plan acts as a guide for the Northern Land Council in growing the reach and impact of the Community Planning and Development Program over the next five years and will remain adaptable to changes of view and direction of the Northern Land Council over that time.

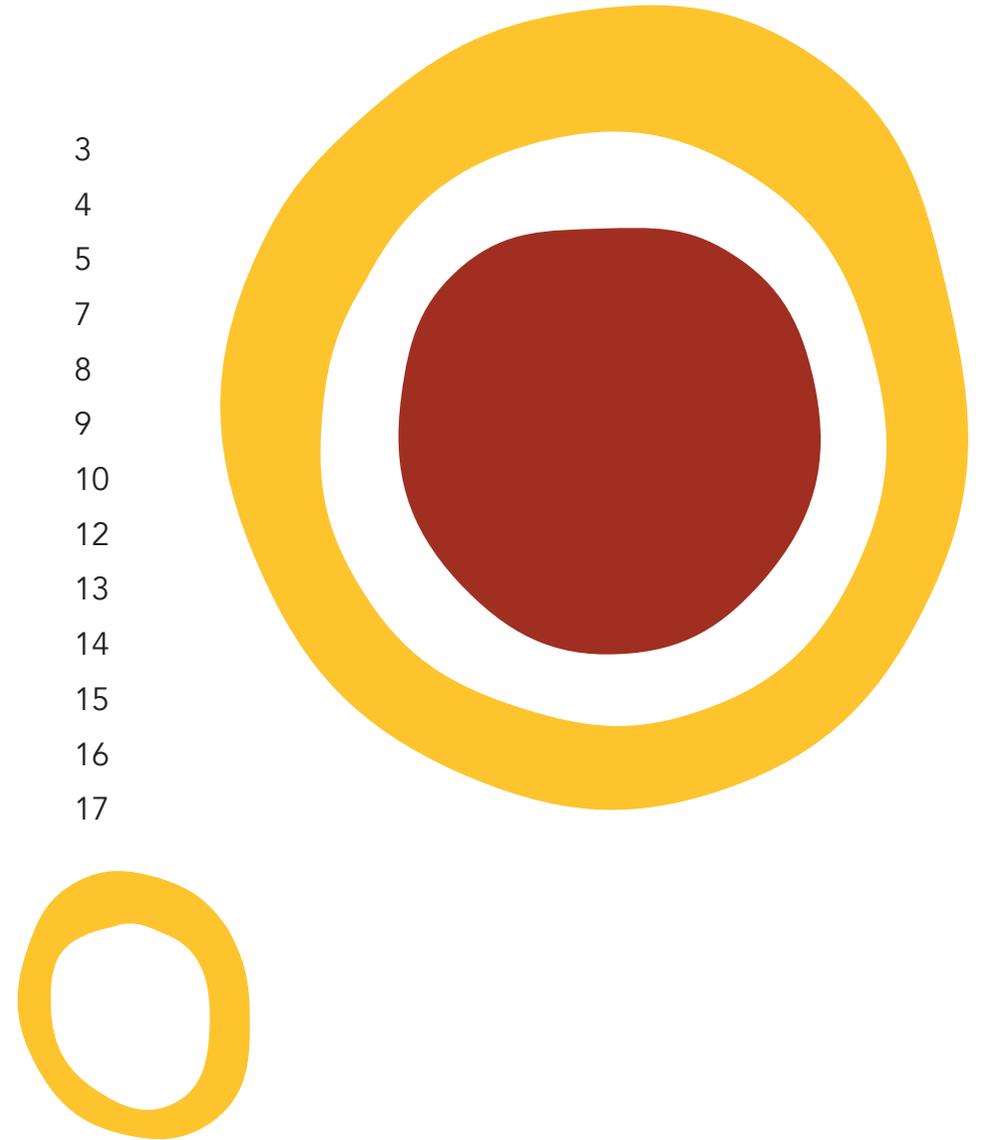
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Introduction

The purpose of the Northern Land Council's (NLC) Community Planning and Development (CP&D) Program's Strategic Plan 2020-25 is to provide direction to and evaluation of growing the reach and impact of the Program over the next five years.

The CP&D Program is a key objective of the NLC to support Traditional Owners (TOs) benefit economically, socially and culturally from the secure possession of their lands, seas and intellectual property.

It was established in 2016 to work alongside Aboriginal groups in building their governance and planning capacity to effectively control their interests and build healthy and resilient communities for future generations.

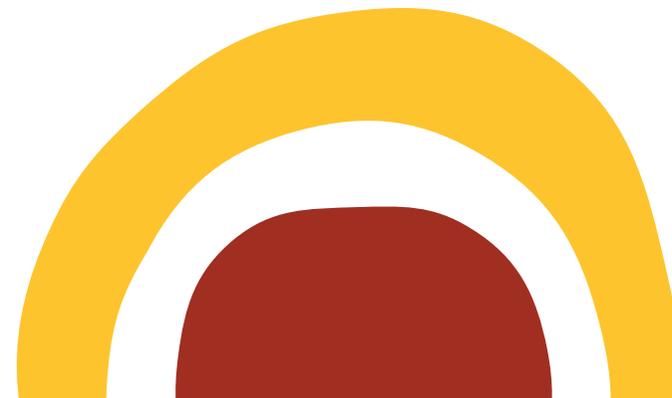
Since then the CP&D Program has established itself as an integral business unit within the NLC and to date recognised as a branch within its division of Community and Regional Services.

Traditional Owner groups in eight locations across the NLC region have opted to use the CP&D Program and have set aside nearly \$8 million of their income toward their development projects. Those groups have planned over 30 CP&D projects that are at different stages of delivery. Projects focus on maintaining culture and language, supporting youth and constructing community infrastructure on homelands.

**'I feel happy and strong for this [project], for the TOs, this community, and for our grandchildren'
[Clancy Guthitjpuay, Gapuwiyak Traditional Owner].**

The scope of this Strategic Plan is centred on NLC reviewing progress of its CP&D Program and identifying gaps and opportunities to chart the potential to further its reach and impact. Its directions are based on available information about the NLC and its CP&D Program and the views of those individuals that engaged in the process. Over 50 documents were reviewed and over 40 interviews with internal and external stakeholders contributed to its development.

This Strategic Plan provides key directions over the next five years that can be regularly assessed to both report progress on developing the CP&D Program and adapt relevant to changing views and directions of the NLC.



Role of CP&D

The CP&D Program supports Aboriginal groups to control their own interests to benefit economically, socially and culturally from the secure possession of their lands and seas

Because...

Aboriginal groups have not always had the resources or been able to effectively use those resources to create positive long term whole of community outcomes...

The Community Planning and Development Program...

Supports Aboriginal groups to build their local governance and planning capabilities, define their aspirations and identify the right projects to do...

So that...

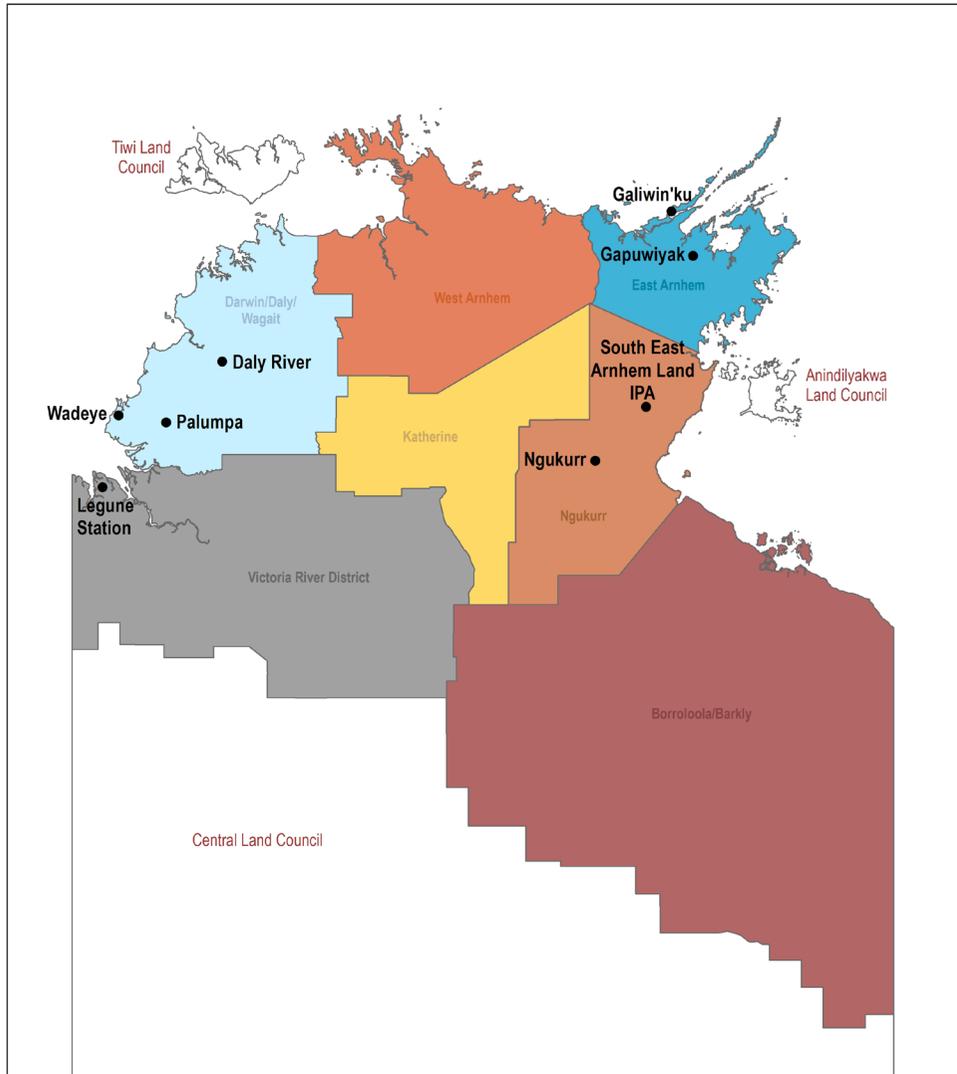
Aboriginal groups have stronger governance and planning capabilities, feel empowered to create a better future and have effective and sustainable projects that improve social, cultural and economic outcomes...

That results in...

Aboriginal groups able to control their own interests to benefit economically, socially and culturally from the secure possession of their lands, seas and intellectual property.

CP&D Impact - 2016 - 2020

CP&D supports Aboriginal groups in 8 locations in 4/7 NLC regions; each with a unique focus they want to address but there are also common themes



Map showing community locations CP&D are working as at 2020

Community	Focus Area
Wadeye	Supporting young people to learn about culture, get a good education and find employment
Palumpa	Getting back on country
Daly River	Keeping culture strong
Gapuwiyak	Employment for young people and business development
Galiwin'ku	Young people and law and justice
SEAL IPA	Supporting ranger groups and culture
Ngukurr	Young people and strengthening community
Legune	Developing Marralum outstation so people can live and work on country

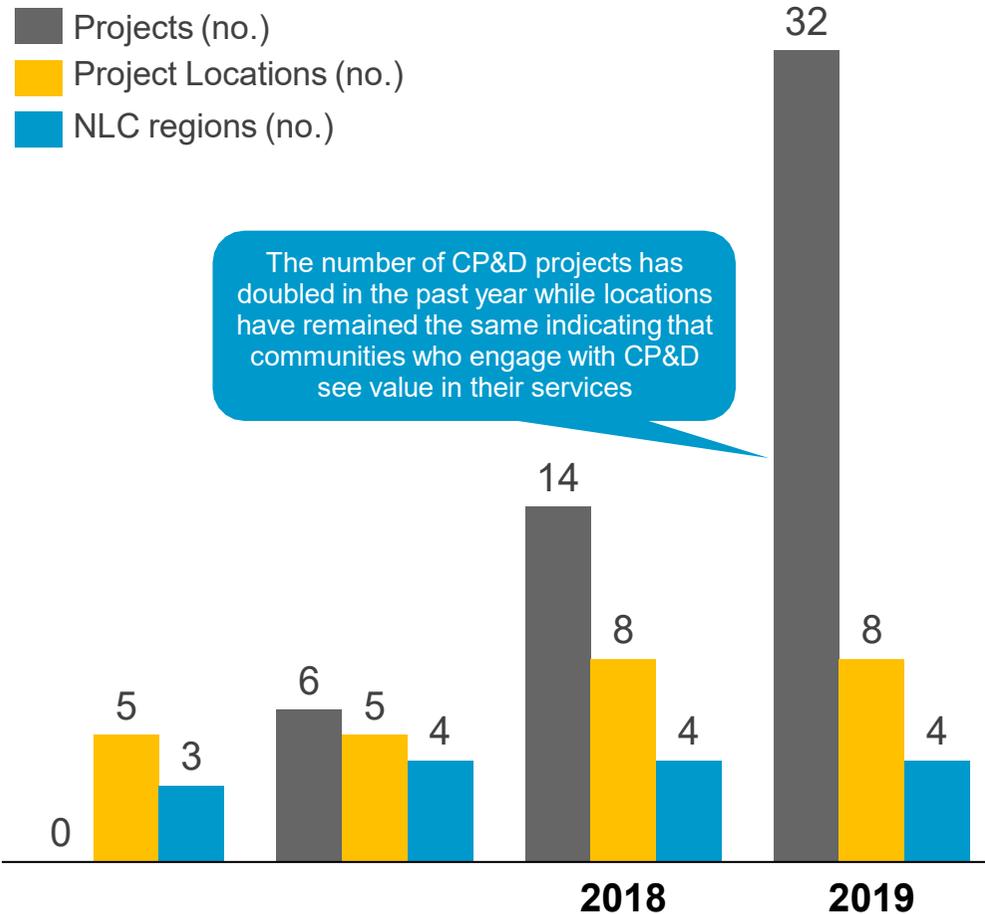
Common themes across these communities

1. Support young people in education, culture and employment
2. Keep culture strong
3. Ensure a future living and working on country

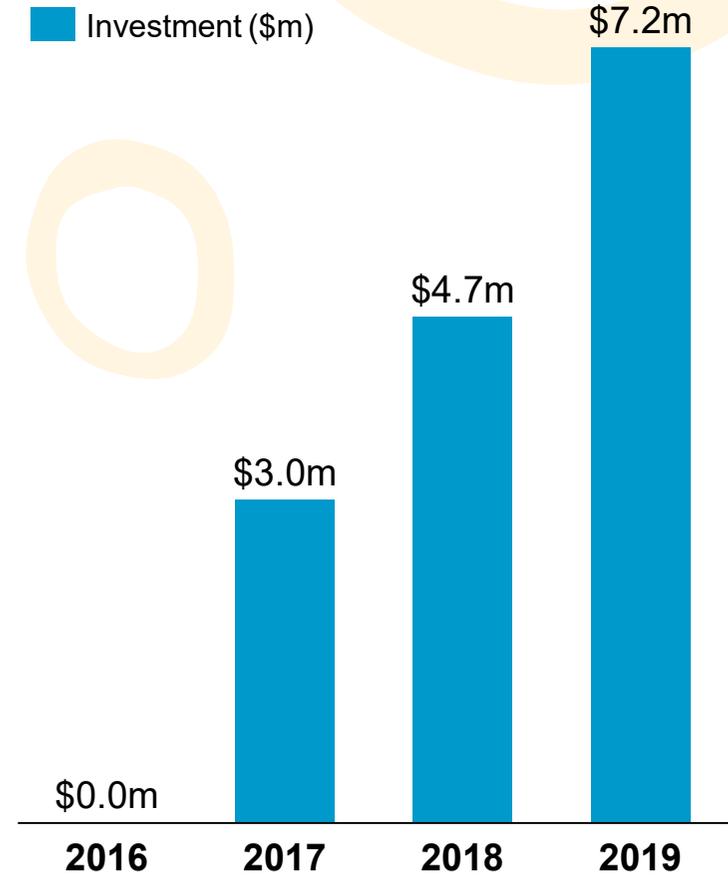
CP&D Impact - 2016 - 2020

Since inception, the number of projects have increased substantially while regions and groups have remained steady; group investment has also grown

CP&D growth in projects, locations and regions from 2016 to 2019



Group investment growth in CP&D from 2016 to 2019



Key Challenges

Key challenges to address are working collaboratively across NLC business areas, expanding CP&D's regional footprint & supporting communities with little or no resources

There are 3 key challenges that CP&D, and NLC more broadly, are facing:

Working collaboratively across NLC

Work to deliver an integrated and coordinated approach that maximises outcomes for community.

Expanding CP&D's regional footprint

The regions and groups that CP&D have worked with has remained steady over time. Ultimately CP&D should be active and have staff presence in all of NLC's 7 regions to be able to engage more groups.

Supporting communities with little or no resources

As a relatively new team and program, CP&D has required income thresholds to help prioritise its work and effectively allocate its resources. Moving forward however, CP&D must be able to serve all groups regardless of their level of land use income.

To address each key challenge:

The strategy attempts to integrate CP&D across NLC business areas by:

Improving other units' understanding of CP&D and the process and practices needed within regional inter-unit teams to deliver CP&D.

Defining opportunities to collaborate with other units (particularly M&E and Legal).

Offering internal CP&D training, tools and support to other units.

See initiatives 1, 3, 4 and 8

The strategy expands CP&D's footprint by:

Increasing the number of staff over 5 years to ultimately have one CP&D officer responsible for each region.

Improving how CP&D communicates its value and opportunity to new groups.

See initiatives 1 and 5

The strategy charts a way forward to support communities with little to no income:¹

Building a strong evidence base to demonstrate outcomes.

Advocating to NIAA for more funding dedicated to groups with no income but have need for CP&D support.

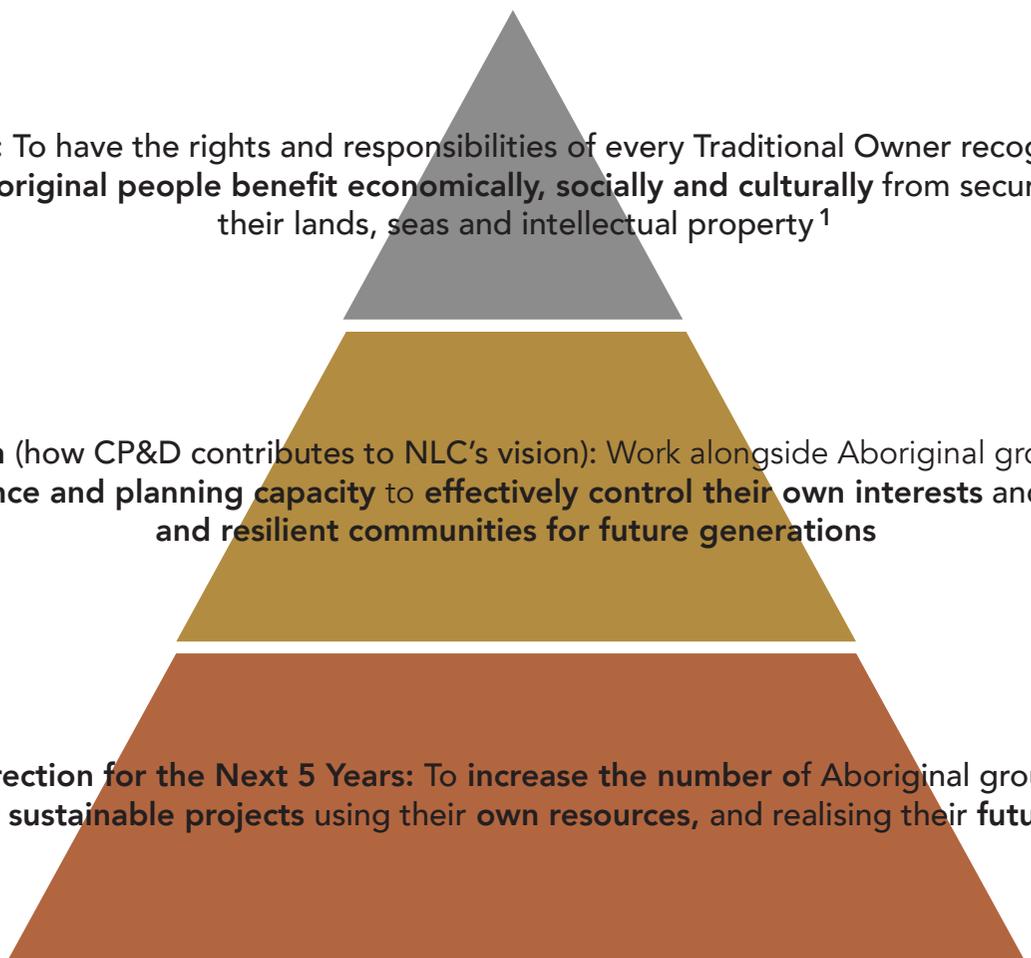
Defining CP&D's role and practice in supporting groups to secure funds and/or project partners.

See initiative 7

¹ The strategy acknowledges that CP&D is still a relatively new program and as such, it does not currently have the evidence base or resources to expand to all communities, including those with limited or no land use income. The strategy therefore focuses on consolidating evidence and advocacy efforts and better defining CP&D's role. Ultimately this will set up CP&D to support all groups regardless of their land use income in the longer term.

CP&D Mission and Direction 2020 - 25

CP&D aspires to increase the number of Aboriginal groups planning and delivering sustainable projects, and realising their future aspirations



NLC's Vision: To have the rights and responsibilities of every Traditional Owner recognised and to ensure that Aboriginal people benefit economically, socially and culturally from secure possession of their lands, seas and intellectual property¹

CP&D's Mission (how CP&D contributes to NLC's vision): Work alongside Aboriginal groups in **building their governance and planning capacity** to **effectively control their own interests** and build **healthy and resilient communities for future generations**

Strategic Direction for the Next 5 Years: To increase the number of Aboriginal groups **planning and delivering sustainable projects** using their own resources, and realising their **future aspirations**

¹Taken from the NLC's Strategic Plan 2016 - 20

CP&D Goals

CP&D is tasked with four broad goals over the next five years

In 5 years time...

	Goal area	Our goals for the future
	1. Communicate the value of CP&D	The governance, planning and community outcomes that CP&D can help create is well understood and respected by Aboriginal groups, internal NLC stakeholders including its leadership and other units, and by external stakeholders
	2. Integrate and coordinate with rest of NLC	NLC acknowledges CP&D as an effective program that helps Aboriginal groups realise benefits from their lands and seas, and implements CP&D in its every day practice
	3. Build the CP&D team and its processes	CP&D has a strong team with the people, skills and processes it needs to reach more groups and effectively deliver its work to support existing and new groups, and has laid foundations to support more local Aboriginal employment and capacity building
	4. Expand the footprint of CP&D	CP&D is equipped to support all groups with sufficient royalties for long term development and planning, but is also supporting other groups to secure funds and partners for community development

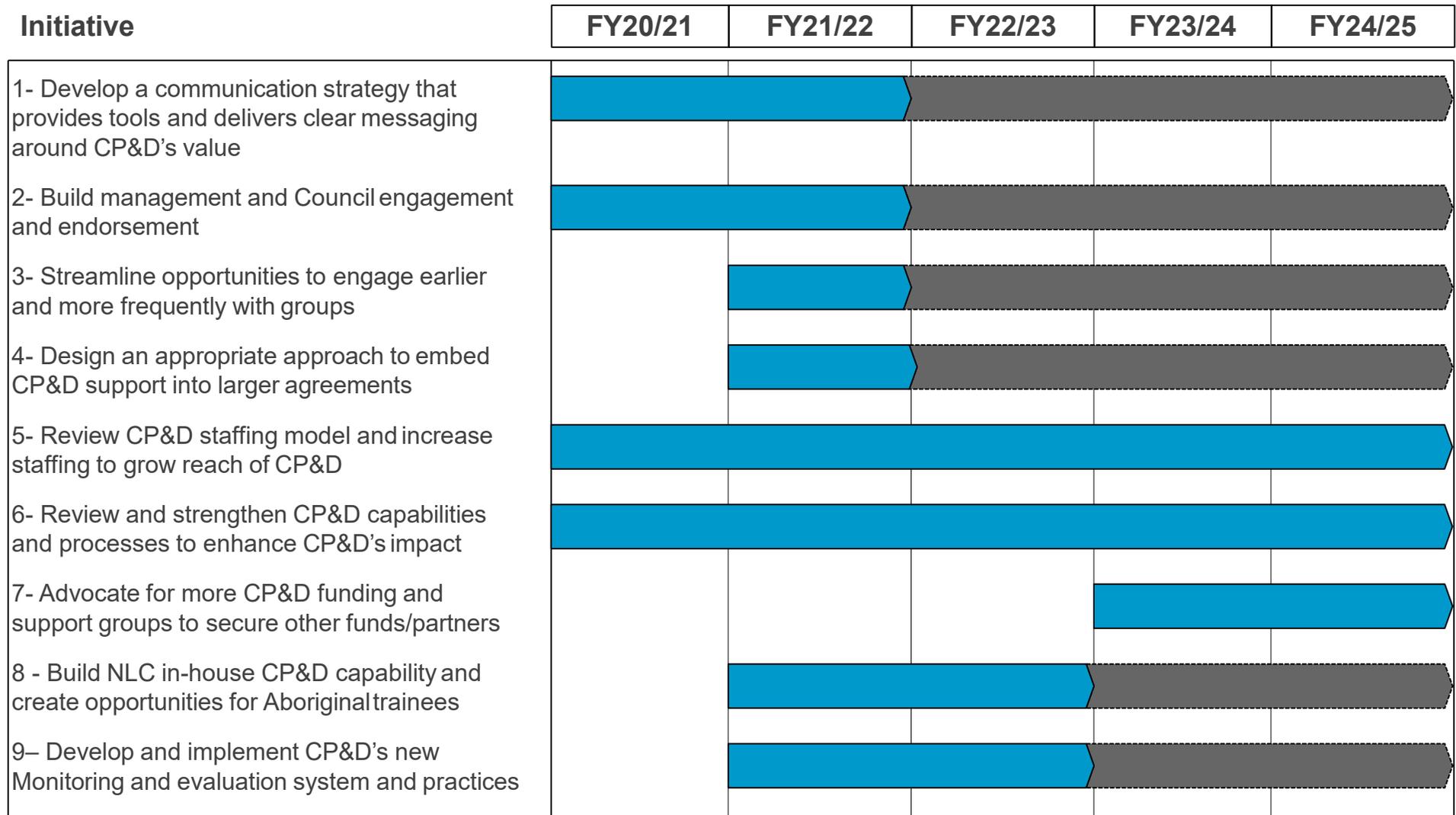
CP&D Strategic Initiatives

CP&D is committing to 9 initiatives that collectively, will contribute to the achievement of its four goals

	Initiatives	Brief description of activities
1	Develop a communication strategy that provides tools and delivers clear messaging about CP&D's value	Recruit Communications & Marketing Officer to lead development of a communication strategy. That strategy will identify key stakeholder groups, reinforce messaging behind how CP&D creates outcomes, develop materials translated into local languages, and define distribution channels.
2	Build management and Council engagement and endorsement	Work closely with CEO, Leadership and Executive Council to build CP&D. Advocate for CP&D sub-committee in Council for community led direction. Incorporate CP&D strategy into NLC Strategic Plan.
3	Streamline opportunities to engage earlier and more frequently with groups	Work with other units to map NLC's various engagement points with community groups and identify opportunities where CP&D may be included earlier in consultations.
4	Design an appropriate approach to embed CP&D support into larger agreements	Co-design Minerals & Energy, Legal, and CP&D's working relationship in large land use agreements. Co-design process must clearly define roles and responsibilities including in agreement making, community consultations and assisting TOs to maximize benefits from their land use agreements
5	Review CP&D staffing model and increase staffing to grow reach of CP&D	Reorientate existing staff to North and South regional responsibilities. Recruit new project officers to establish regional presence (one project officer in each region). Recruit Senior Project Officers and Support Officers to build appropriate support.
6	Review and strengthen CP&D capabilities and processes to enhance CP&D's impact	Develop inhouse tools and standards that document best practice and culturally appropriate governance and service delivery approaches. Collaborate with partners to improve overall quality of governance capability building offerings in the region.
7	Advocate for more CP&D funding and support groups to secure other funds/partners	Consolidate evidence of outcomes. Advocate to NIAA for funding dedicated to communities unable to pay for CP&D support. Consider and define CP&D's role and practice in supporting individual groups with insufficient royalties as they attempt to secure funds and/or project partners.
8	Build NLC in-house CP&D capability and create opportunities for Aboriginal trainees	Recruit Meeting Facilitation Trainer and align training with NLC's Learning and Development Unit. Develop internal CP&D tools and deliver internal training sessions with other NLC units. Identify opportunities to take on Aboriginal trainees.
9	Develop and implement CP&D's new monitoring and evaluation system and practices	Finish development of CP&D's Monitoring and Evaluation System and begin its implementation to check with TOs the value of CP&D and the benefits of their projects on their communities.

CP&D Strategic Initiatives

The initiatives will be staggered, allowing us to bring in necessary resources to deliver the initiatives and build momentum over time



■ Initiate initiatives ■ Ongoing implementation of initiatives

Operational Development

To achieve our initiatives, the CP&D team will need to grow to 16FTE by 2025

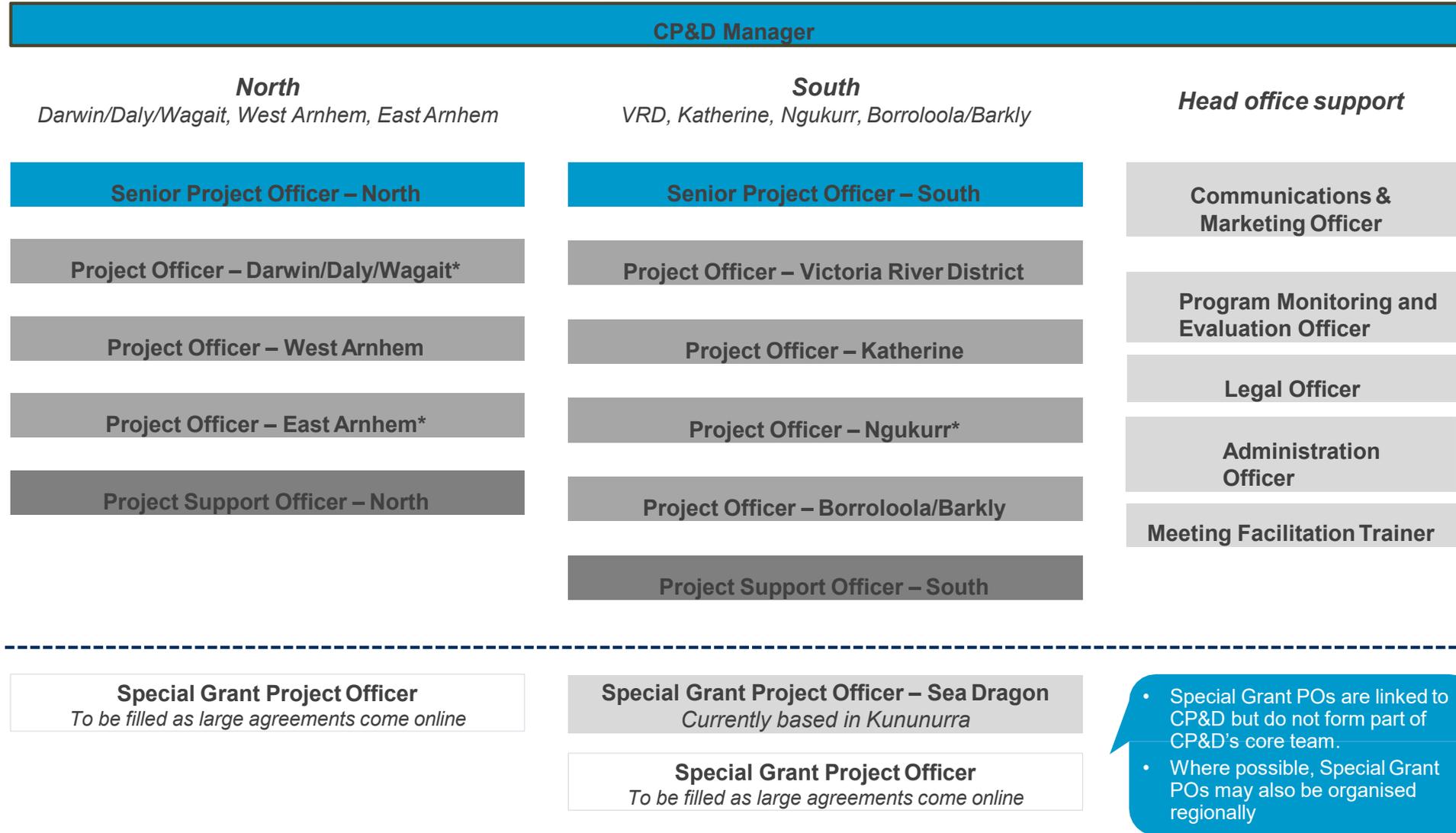
FTE (Full Time Equivalent) Resourcing

Role / Function		FY19/20	FY20/21	FY21/22	FY22/23	FY23/24	FY24/25	Assumptions
CP&D Manger (no change)		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Program M&E Officer (no change - secure ongoing function)		1	1	1	1	1	1	• Secure funds for ongoing position.
Legal Officer (no change)		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Admin Officer (no change)		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Comms & Marketing Officer (new function)			1	1	1	1	1	• Integrate across division or organisation more broadly (initiative 1)
Meeting Facilitation Trainer (new function)			0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	• Trainer will only be required on part time basis (initiative 8)
Senior Project Officers (growth function)		1	1	1	2	2	2	• Current SPO oversees North & South initially; 2nd SPO needed once momentum builds (initiative 5)
Project Support Officers (new function)				1	1	2	2	• 1 PSO initially but 2nd PSO to each cover north and south regions (initiative 5)
Project Officers (growth function)		2	3	4	5	6	7	• Existing POs assigned regional role. Ramp up to 1 PO per region (initiative 5)
Existing region	Darwin/Daly/Wagait		1	1	1	1	1	• Existing project workload will maintain based on trend that current groups continue to invest more money.
	East Arnhem Land		1	1	1	1	1	
	Ngukurr		1	1	1	1	1	
New region	Borroloola/Barkly			(shared across other regions)	1	1	1	• Gradual ramp up of PO focus as new projects come online in new regions
	Katherine		(shared across other regions)			1	1	
	Victoria River District						1	
	West Arnhem Land			1	1	1	1	
Grand Total FTE		7	9.2	11.2	13.2	15.2	16.2	

CP&D Organisational Structure 2025

The expanded team will adopt a regional structure supported by head office staff

CP&D 'dream team' in five years' time will comprise of 16FTE in total and organised in a regional model



*Existing staff activity

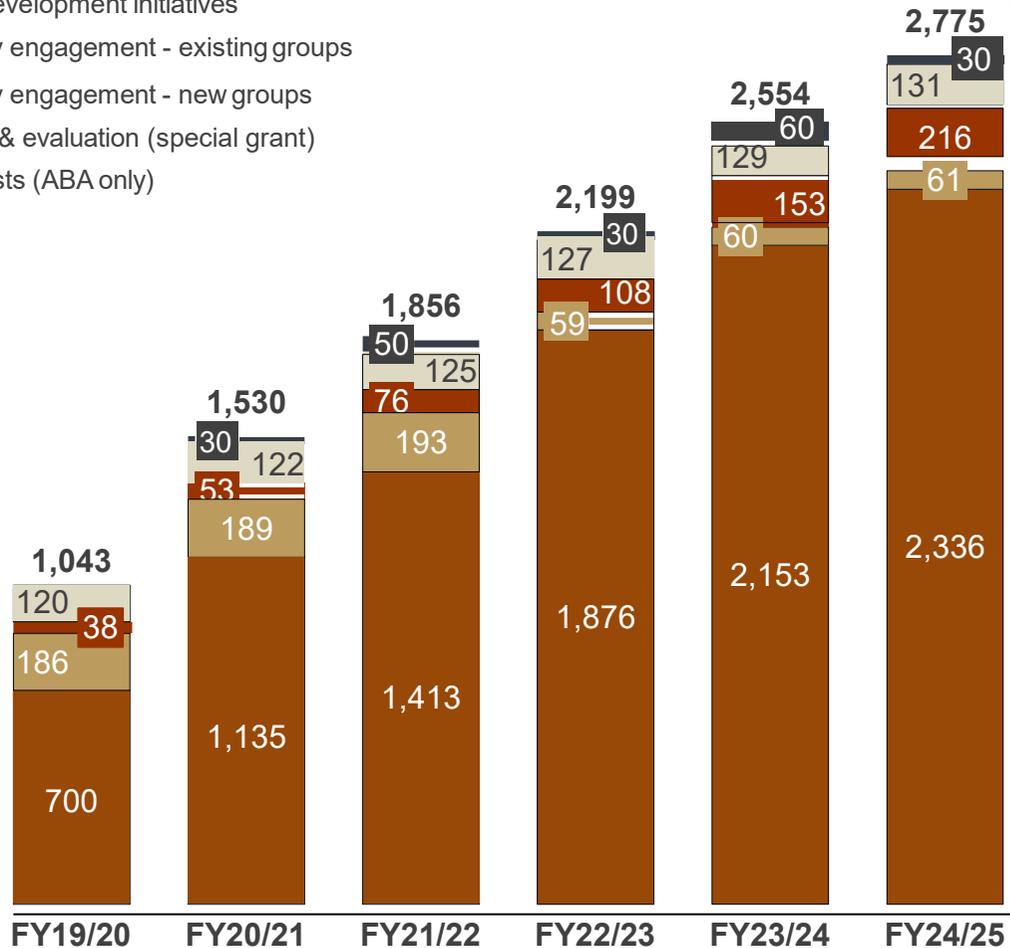
Resourcing

To deliver on this strategic plan, CP&D's operating costs are forecast to grow to about \$2.8m by 2025

Total Operating Expenses, Estimated Projection

Including project costs (\$'000s)

- Program development initiatives
- Community engagement - existing groups
- Community engagement - new groups
- Monitoring & evaluation (special grant)
- Staffing costs (ABA only)



Assumptions:

Program development initiatives

- FY20/21 - ~\$30k for interpreter service for communication strategy
- FY21/22 - ~\$30k for external consultant to facilitate co-design with Mining and Energy and document approach; ~\$20k for hiring short term resource to develop tools and policies for best practice governance and service delivery approaches
- FY23/24 - ~\$30k for external consultant to support consolidation of evidence for advocacy efforts
- FY22/23 and ongoing - ~\$30k for external consultants and local researchers to conduct annual evaluation and reporting under new MES

Community engagement – existing groups

- Existing cost of engagement grows with inflation

Community engagement – new groups

- Apply average historical cost growth rate of existing community engagement since FY16/17 of 42% and hold constant

Measurement and evaluation

- Includes salary cost of current M&E Officer up to 22/23 when special grant expires. New M&E Officer salary to be secured through ABA in 22/23.

Staffing costs

- Excludes staffing covered by large agreements such as Project Sea Dragon
- Growth from 8 FTE to 16 FTE by FY24/25 with wages increasing by 1.8% CPI per year and 30% on costs.

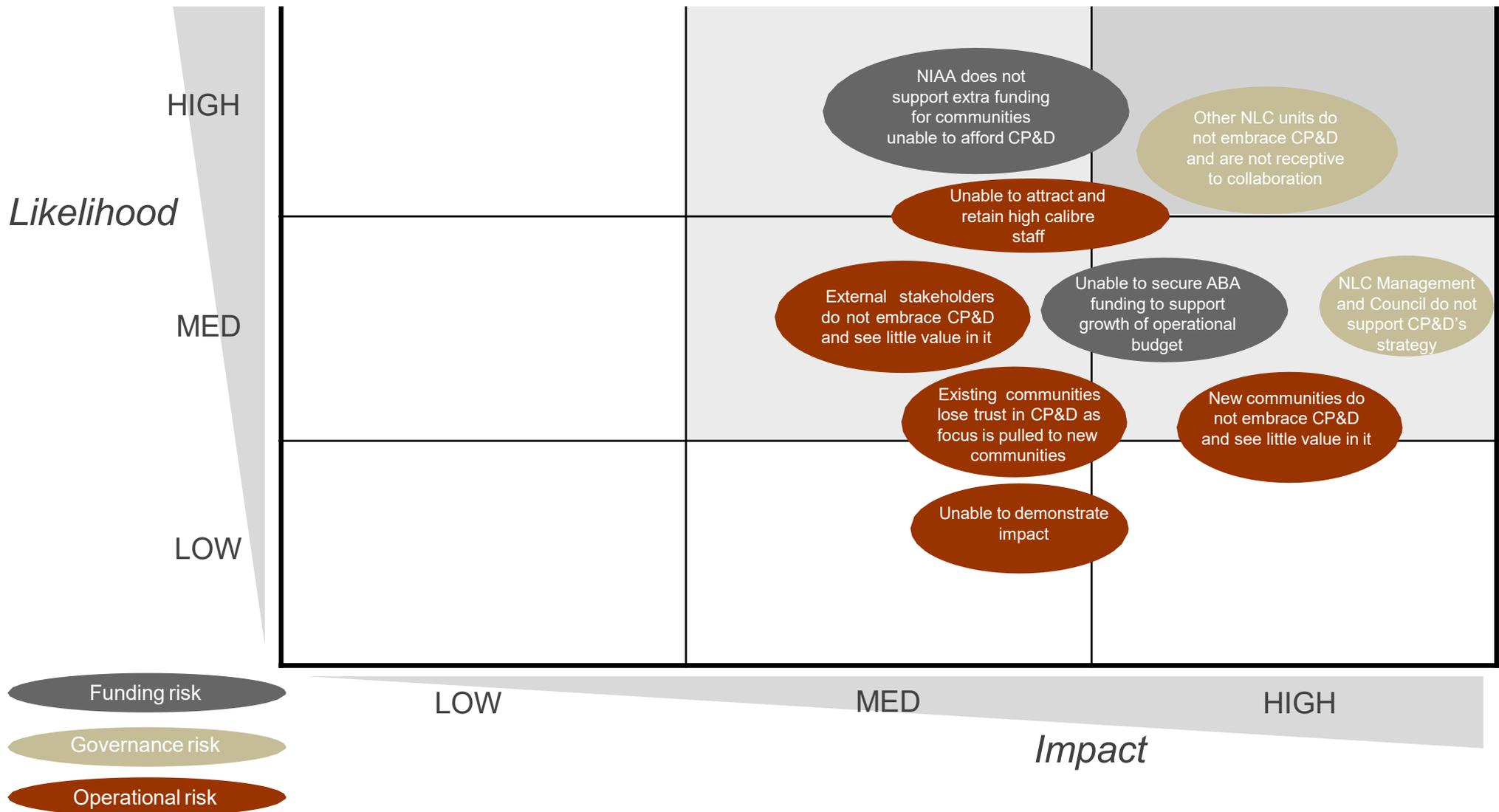
Indicators of success

Our success in achieving our four goals will be measured on an annual basis with reference to the following specific targets

Goal area	FY20/21	FY21/22	FY22/23	FY23/24	FY24/25
1. <i>Communicate the value of CP&D</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication strategy has been developed that identifies stakeholder groups, hones messaging and specifies information dissemination approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials and mediums to communicate CP&D's messaging has been developed. It is in plain language and translated to local language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key stakeholder groups including other NLC units, communities and Government have a growing understanding of CP&D's value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP&D is a well understood by internal and external stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP&D is well understood by internal and external stakeholders and is well respected as an effective way to create outcomes for communities
2. <i>Integrate and coordinate with the rest of NLC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NLC leadership support is strengthened by CEO and GM buy-in as well as establishment of CP&D council sub-committee CP&D strategy is incorporated into NLC's overall Strategic Plan, Corporate Plan & Regionalisation Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NLC has mapped its engagement points with community groups through its various units and has identified where CP&D may be included earlier in community consultations A co-design process with Minerals & Energy and Legal has been completed to agree on CP&D's involvement in larger land use agreements. Formal internal policies and tools to support NLC units integrate CP&D have been developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NLC approach to ensure earlier CP&D engagement with communities is documented and endorsed by leadership CP&D's involvement in land use agreements has been documented and endorsed by leadership Undertaking internal light touch training sessions with other NLC units on CP&D approaches – these align with NLC's broader L&D program and traineeships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP&D is engaging earlier with communities and engaged in larger land use agreements in line with new policies CP&D continues to support NLC meeting and facilitation training in line with broader L&D program Able to take on board Aboriginal trainees into CP&D for mentoring and development in line with NLC's broader L&D program 	
3. <i>Build the CP&D team and its processes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing CP&D staff reorientated to regional responsibilities Comms & Marketing Officer and Meeting Facilitation Trainer recruited Additional Project Officer recruited Total FTE grown to 9.2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit new Project Officer and Project Support Officer to reinforce regional presence Total FTE grown to 11.2 Tools, policies and quality standards for culturally appropriate governance and service delivery approaches have been developed CP&D Monitoring and Evaluation System finalised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit Senior Project Officers and Project Officers to build regional model Recruit M&E Officer Total FTE grown to 13.2 Collaborating with others who provide governance capability offerings to improve overall quality of services in regions. Current M&E Officer position ends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total FTE grown to 15 Recruit Project Officer and Support Officer to build regional model CP&D conducts skills audit to identify skill gaps and potential for specialisation CP&D Monitoring and Evaluation System is being implemented and reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total FTE grown to 16 Recruit Project Officer to build regional model Decision made on whether to locate staff in regional offices CP&D conducts skills audit on rolling yearly basis CP&D Monitoring and Evaluation System is being implemented and reported Regionalisation of CP&D complete
4. <i>Expand the footprint of CP&D</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing project officers have been assigned regional focus to start growing into new regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP&D has commenced growth into West Arnhem, Katherine, Borroloola/Barkly and VRD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence base demonstrating CP&D outcomes completed CP&D is undertaking projects in West Arnhem, Katherine, Borroloola/Barkly and VRD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit proposal and negotiate with NIAA for additional CP&D funding for communities with insufficient funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP&D's role in supporting groups with insufficient funds is defined and documented e.g. assist in securing other funds, facilitate partnerships

Risk Assessment

There are a range of risks of medium-high impact and likelihood that CP&D will need to manage closely



Assumptions

NLC is currently in a period of change and there may be future changes and circumstances that will impact on this strategy

NLC leadership is embarking on a new organisational strategy with ambitions to improve NLC engagement across communities (among other things). This CP&D strategy has been drafted with reference to the current operating environment, but a future NLC strategy may alter the organisation's priorities which may have implications for this CP&D strategy.

Things that may change in broader NLC context	Implications for CP&D Strategic Plan
<i>NLC is required to reduce expenditure across all units</i>	It may be difficult to secure resources required to deliver CP&D's growth ambitions. CP&D may need to consider leveraging regional staff to support growth and achieve a presence in the regions.
<i>NLC's commitment to building local Aboriginal capability and engagement (particularly youth) becomes an increasingly strong focus and more active efforts are being made on the ground to create these opportunities</i>	While Goal 3 and Initiative 8 focusses on creating opportunities for Aboriginal trainees, depending on the growing focus within NLC, more efforts may be required to support Aboriginal employment, local capability building and engagement with youth.
<i>CP&D becomes formally embedded in the NLC regionalisation strategy and there is a more immediate demand for CP&D officers to be based in the regions</i>	The current plan only contemplates moving staff to regional offices late in the 5 year time frame (Initiative 5). Should these plans need to be accelerated, CP&D will need to consider practical ramifications, in particular, housing. One solution may be to base staff in Katherine as a hub for other regions in the medium-term.
<i>NLC views CP&D increasingly less as a royalty distribution mechanism but more as an opportunity to use NLC skills to work with communities to help build their capacity. Funding is no longer pegged to royalties, rather there is an increasing focus on obtaining funding from other sources.</i>	These changes are long term and involve reconceiving CP&D's business model and program design. While the current plan contemplates the need to redesign how CP&D supports communities with insufficient royalties (Initiative 7), there may need to be a larger piece of work to carefully design a new sustainable approach for CP&D.





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